

American Girl®

Celebrating 10 years of fun!

September/October 2003 ★ \$3.95

Quiz!

Fashion Fads

**Throw a
Back-to-School
Sleepover**

**200 Free
Stickers!**

**Solve Your
Friendship
Problems**

PLUS
*Two new
contests you
can enter!*

Super Study Tips for School



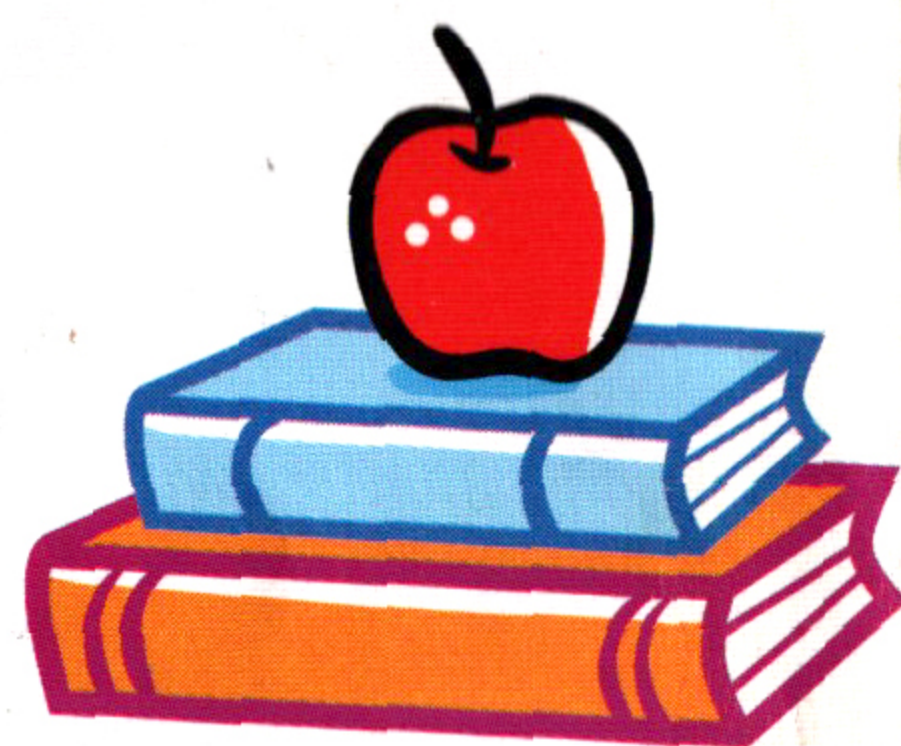
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Stickers

See AG online!

Visit americangirl.com to peek behind the scenes of AG magazine! Always get a parent's permission before surfing the Web or giving out your full name, address, or any other personal info.



Back-to-School Sleepover

Kick off the new year
with an A+ party!

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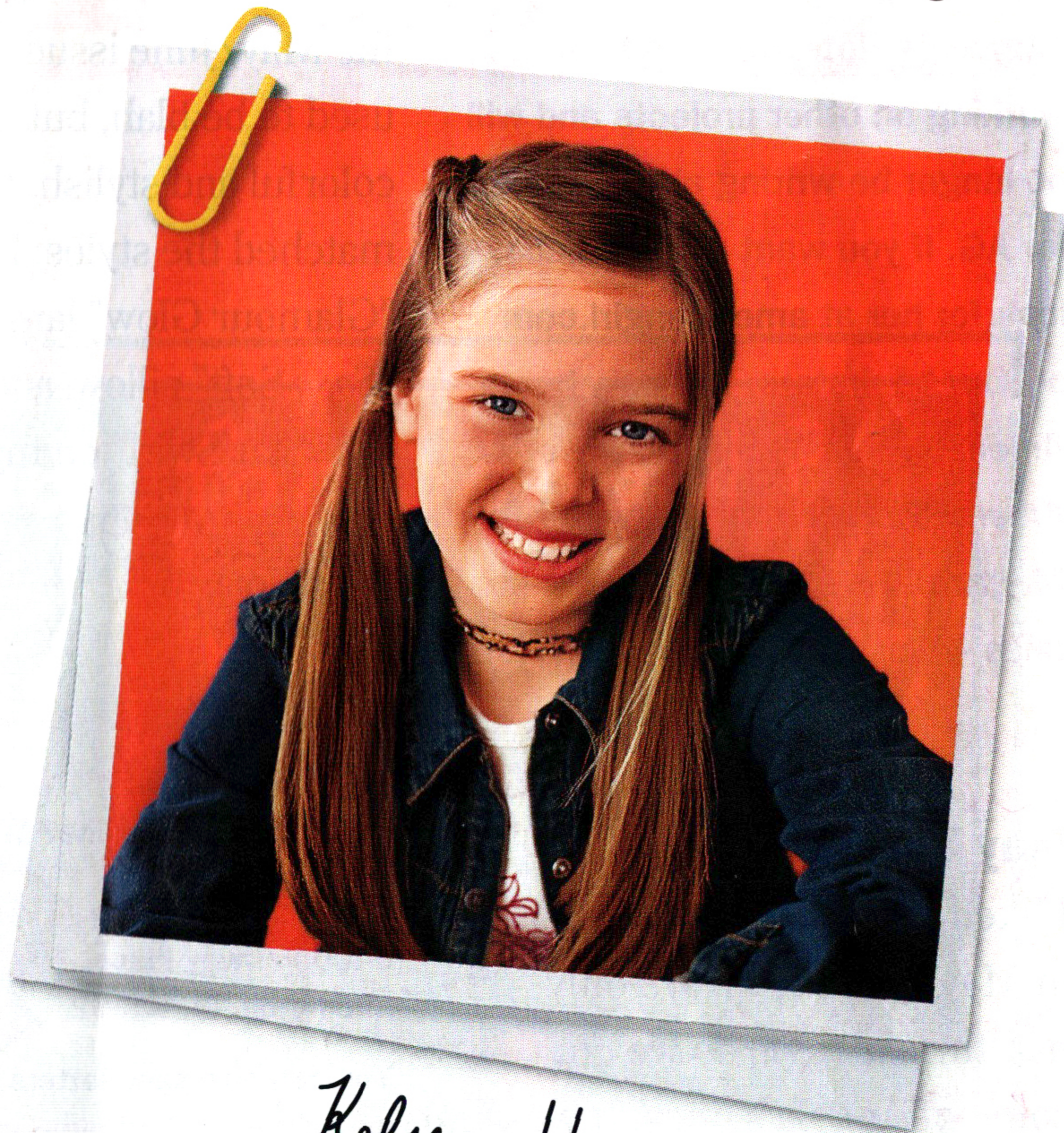
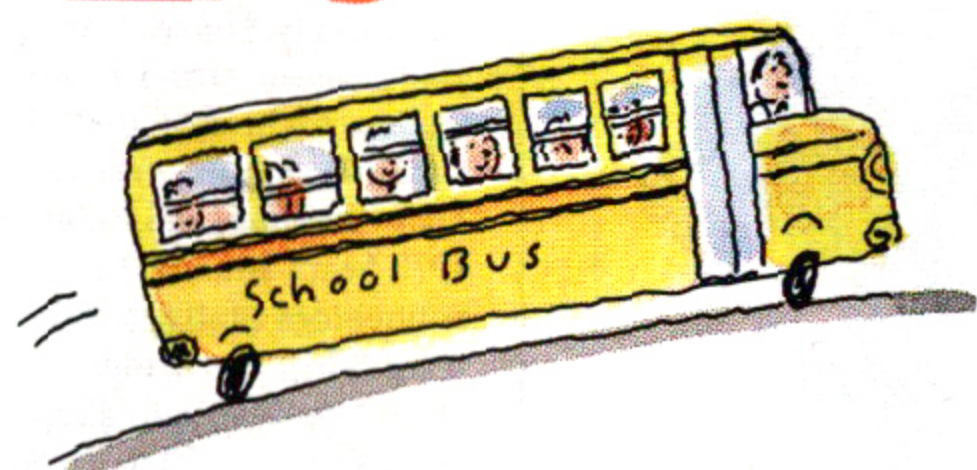
americangirl.com



AG's School Poll

Teachers, uniforms, homework—see how you compare to other readers

10



Kelsey H.

Friendship Troubles

Get good advice on how to deal with your worst pal problems.

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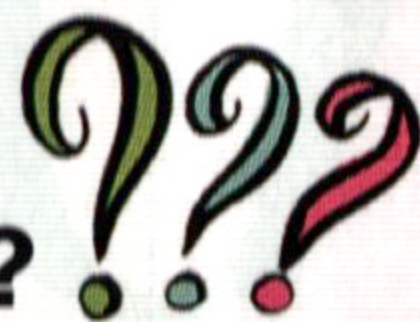
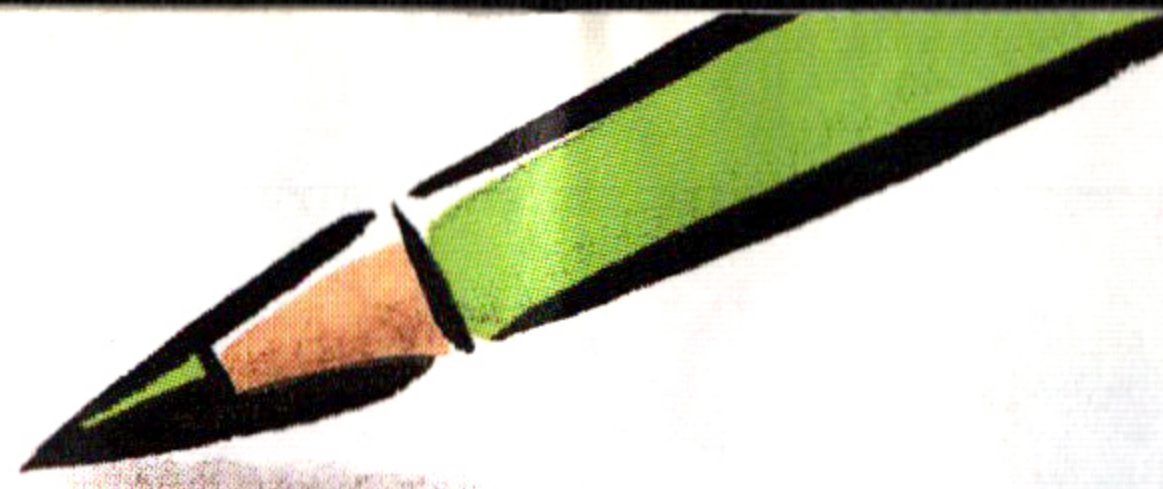
About the Cover

Meet Kelsey H., age 11.

Kelsey's long hair was even longer when she came to our cover shoot. With her O.K., we trimmed off about four inches! To see other hairstyles we tried on Kelsey, and to find out how to vote for your favorite, go to "Behind the Scenes" on page 49.



Letters from You



Where's Amelia?

Marissa Moss, author of "Amelia's Notebook," is busy working on other projects and will no longer be writing about Amelia for AG. If you want more Amelia, look for her at americangirl.com or your bookstore. Her new book, *Amelia's Best Year Ever: Favorite Amelia Stories from American Girl Magazine*, is full of classic Amelia tales—plus some new ones!

Play Time



I liked the play "Deadline!" in May/June 2003. We only had three people so we cut some of Angela's lines. It was so fun and we laughed a lot!

Paulina C.
Age 10, California

Reader Surprise

On page 39, you'll read about our latest Reader Surprise contest! To enter, just send a postcard by October 15 with your first and last name, address, and phone number to:

Reader Surprise—S/O
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562



Room Redo



I really loved "Change It" from the May/June issue. My room used to be blah, but now it's colorful and stylish. I mixed and matched the styles: I made the "Glamour Glow" lamp and the "Sooo Soft" pillow, and I used the "Star Swirl" on my curtains.

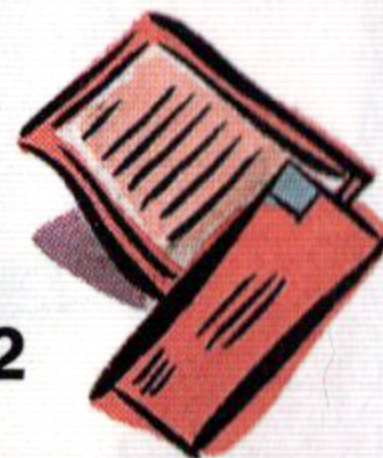
Terra D.
Age 13, Ohio

Write to Us!

Want to drop us a line? Write us at:

AmericanGirl

8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562



You can also send letters via e-mail to im_agmag_editor@pleasantco.com.

Either way, be sure to include your first and last name and your birth date. We can't use every letter we receive, but we read and learn from each one.

Official Rules

1. Drawing not open to employees of Pleasant Company and its affiliates.
2. Only one entry per family.
3. To be valid, all entries must be received by mail by October 15, 2003. Entries may not be faxed or e-mailed.
4. All entries become the property of Pleasant Company and will not be returned.
5. Void where prohibited by law.

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Parents' Choice
Gold Award



The National
Magazine
Awards Finalist

AmericanGirl®

Girls Express



Buzzword

American girls everywhere will be using this buzzword this season:

sanguine

How to say it: SAN-gwen

What it means: cheerfully optimistic

Where it comes from: From the Latin word for blood, *sanguine* came to mean "cheerful" during medieval times, when a person with a reddish complexion was thought to be good-natured.

One way to use it: Making a new friend on the first day of school gave Emily a sanguine outlook for the semester.

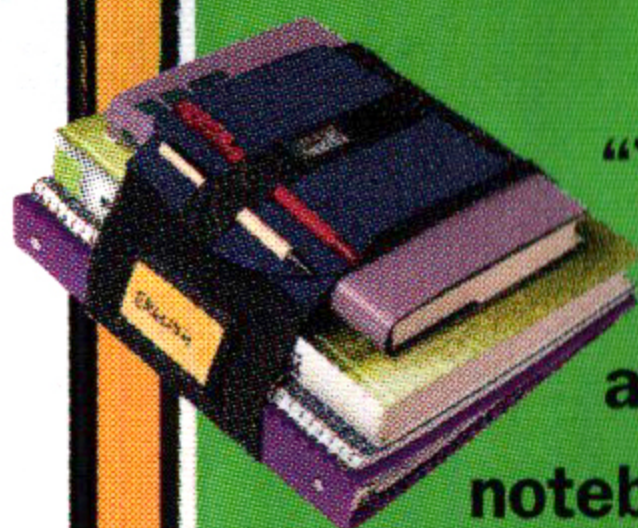


The buzzword is tucked somewhere into this issue of *American Girl*. Can you find it? Answer is on page 44.

Cool for School?

We asked readers to test these new products.

Keep It Together



"The Mead Wrapper Keeper stretches around your folders and notebooks to hold them together. I liked that it keeps your stuff neat when you carry it."



★★★★★
Christina K.
Age 9, New York



"3M Stretch Web hangs in your locker or on a wall to hold things like pictures or pens. It's a good invention, but it doesn't hold much stuff."



★★★★☆
Alexis E.
Age 11, Florida

Hunger Busters



"Skippy Squeeze Stix is peanut butter in a tube you can squirt right into your mouth or onto a snack like a banana. I really liked it! You can just grab it and go."



★★★★★
Diana T.
Age 11, California



"I like grilled cheese, but I don't like crust, so I liked Uncrustables Grilled Cheese Sandwiches. They taste good and are easy to prepare."

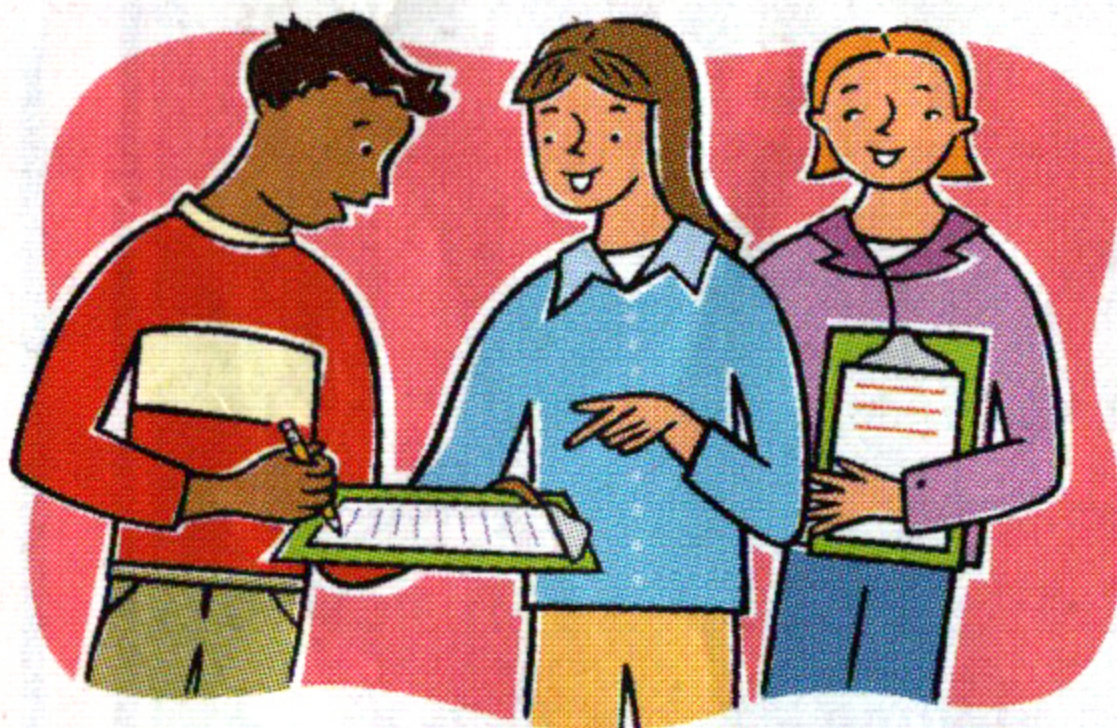


★★★★★
Cristen M.
Age 11, Wisconsin



Shining Stars

When their school lunchroom made the switch from metal silverware to plastic utensils, Haley A. and Courtney K. knew the change wasn't good for the environment. According to Courtney, students were using and tossing three big bucketfuls of plastic utensils each day! The school said the change saved money, but the Wisconsin fifth graders wanted to stick with washable metal silverware. "We might have been saving money, but we weren't saving the environment, and that's the important thing," Courtney explains.



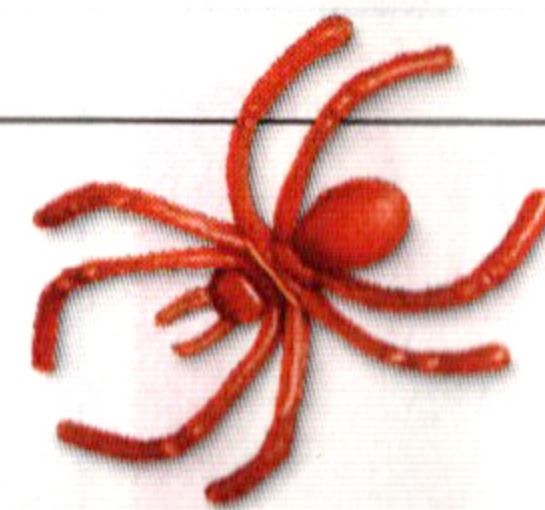
Encouraged by their teacher, Haley collected 72 signatures from students and teachers opposed to the switch, and Courtney spoke to the school board about how plastic utensils end up in landfills. The determined friends convinced the school board to go back to metal silverware!

You can shine, too.

Want to make your lunchroom kinder to the environment? Try these tips.

- Pack your lunch in a reusable lunch bag.
- Bring milk in a thermos instead of buying a carton at school.
- Bring your own metal silverware and a cloth napkin.

Charmed!



Spice up your hair for Halloween with these super styles.

Spider Girl

Braid a black pipe cleaner into each of eight small braids, four on each side of your head. Secure the ends of the braids with small elastics. Trim pipe cleaners, if needed. Bend braids into spider-leg shapes. Tuck a few plastic spider rings into your 'do to complete your look.

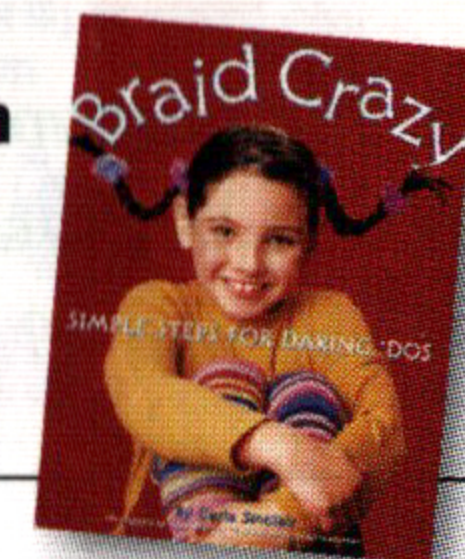


Purr-fect

Braid a black pipe cleaner into each of two small braids near your hairline. Secure the ends of the braids with small elastics. Trim pipe cleaners, if needed. Bend the braids into cat-ear-shaped triangles. Wind any remaining braid around the bottom of each triangle, and secure with bobby pins.



For complete instructions for these styles and many more Halloween hair ideas, check out *Braid Crazy: Simple Steps for Daring 'Dos* by Carla Sinclair, published by Chronicle Books.



School Surprises

Copy your predictions for the new school year onto a sheet of paper, then seal them in an envelope. No peeking 'til school's out!

This year, I'll get my best grades in

Language Arts

The best teacher I'll have this year will

be Miss Mark

My best day of this school year will

come when field trip

My most embarrassing moment

will happen when I fart in public

I'll meet a new kid who will

be silly

I'll become friends with

Shacha, and we'll

have a great time when we

go on field trip

The most fun my friends and I have this

year will be when go on last field trip

True Story

Rachel T. plays the drums in a funky rock band with her dad and mom!



Dear American Girl,

I've been a drummer since I was six years old. When I first started drumming, my dad taught me what to do. After I'd been playing for a few months, I started taking drum lessons. Then my dad asked me if I wanted to play drums with him in a family band. I thought it was a great idea!

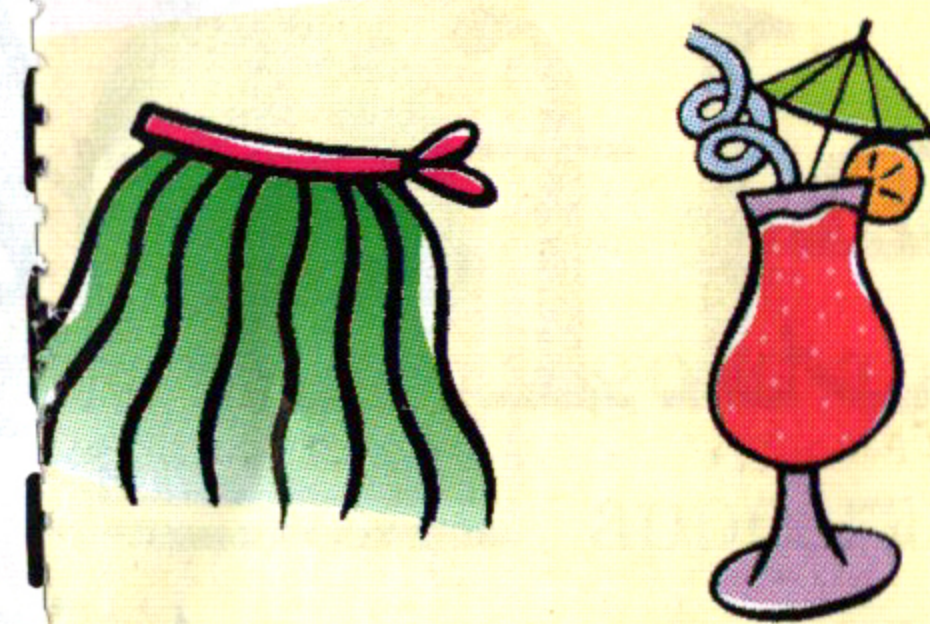
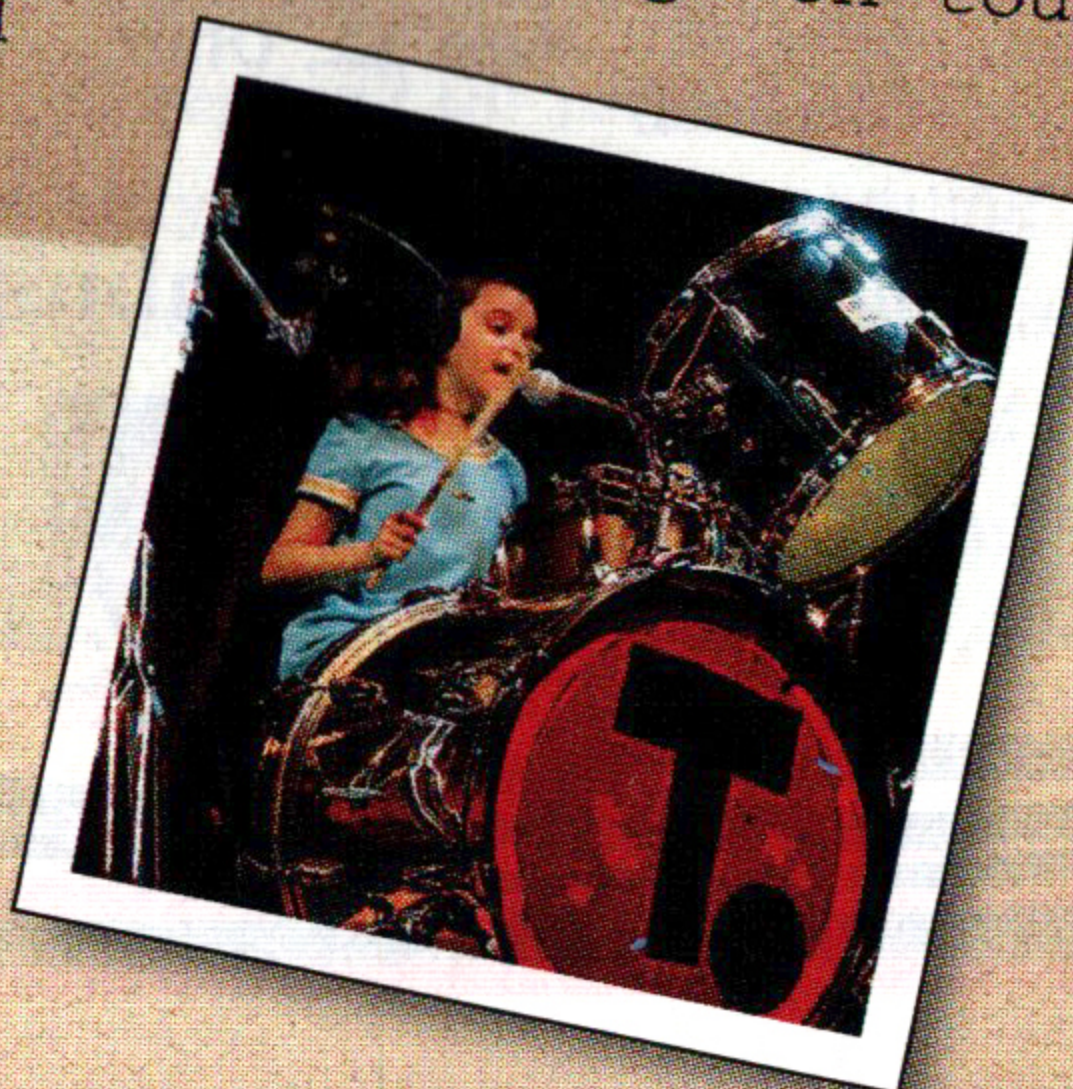
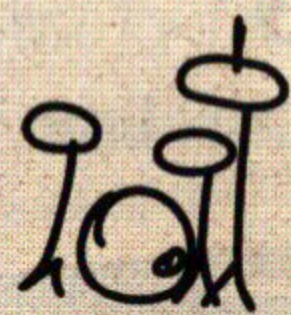
It's really fun to be in a band with my mom and dad. I get to be with them all the time. Our band is called the Trachtenburg Family Slideshow Players because we come up with our songs in an interesting way. My dad finds old slides and writes songs about them. Then we show the slides when we perform the songs onstage.

We do shows all around the country. When we go on tour, I like to swim at the hotels, and I also like to sign autographs.

It's really fun—and easy—to be a drummer. I think other girls should give it a try!

Sincerely,

Rachel T.
Age 9, New York



inely carved



a casual conversation
ers drink coffee

Look-Alikes

friend, and tell us why
ik alike. Mail your entry
address on page 2,
with your first and last
address, and birth date.
ne: October 15, 2003.
avorites will appear in the
/April 2004 issue. Sorry,
n't return your photos.



Shining Stars

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- Bring milk in a thermos instead of buying a carton at school.
- Bring your own metal silverware and a cloth napkin.

carcitect • yappachino

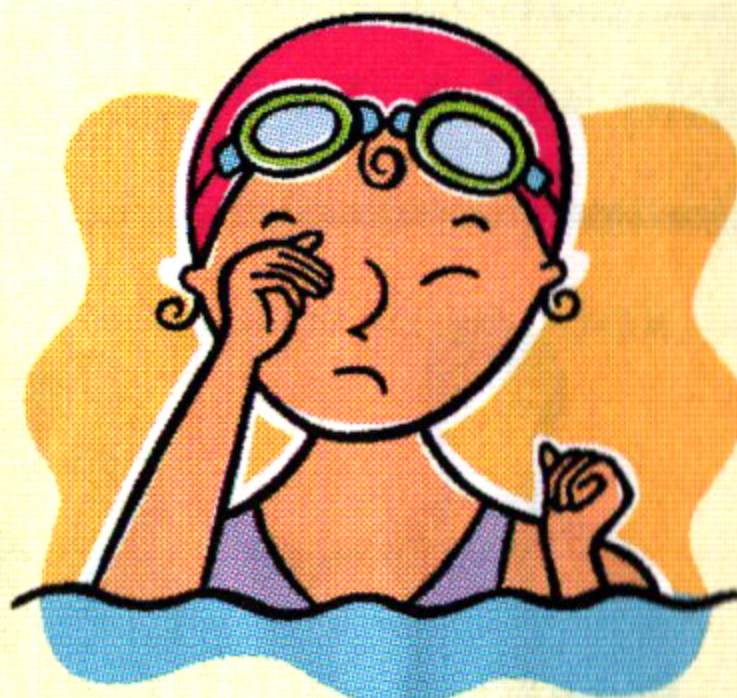
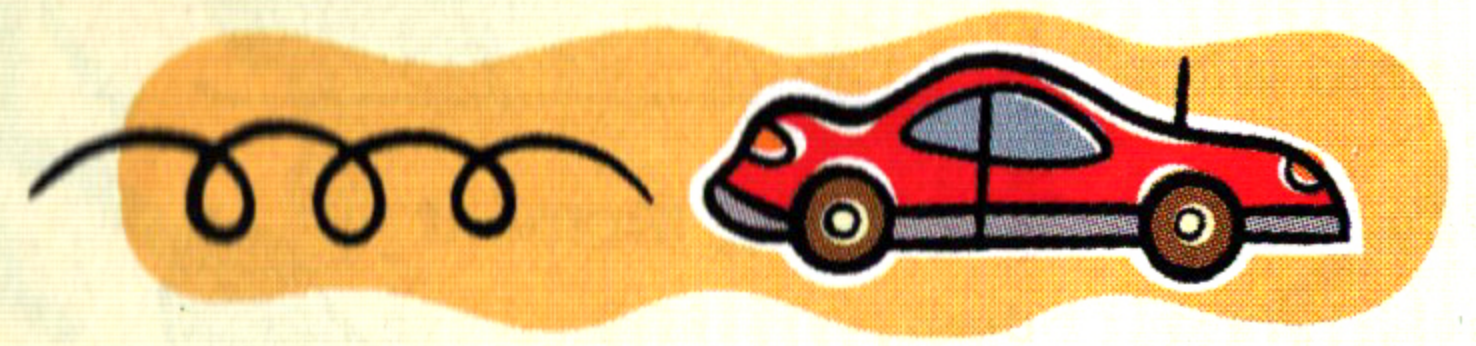
AG Dictionary

*Ingenious, clever, or absurd—
Have fun using your new words!*

carcitect \KAR-ka-tekt\ *noun*: someone who designs cars



Jordyn W.
Age 10, New York



chloreye \KLOR-eye\ *noun*: an eye irritated by the chlorine in a swimming pool



Madeline D.
Age 10, Belgium

crumpy \KRUM-pee\ *adjective*: feeling crabby and grumpy at the same time



Jessi B.
Age 14, Michigan



destinesia \des-ti-NEE-zha\ *noun*: going somewhere to do or get something, but forgetting what you needed to do or get when you arrive

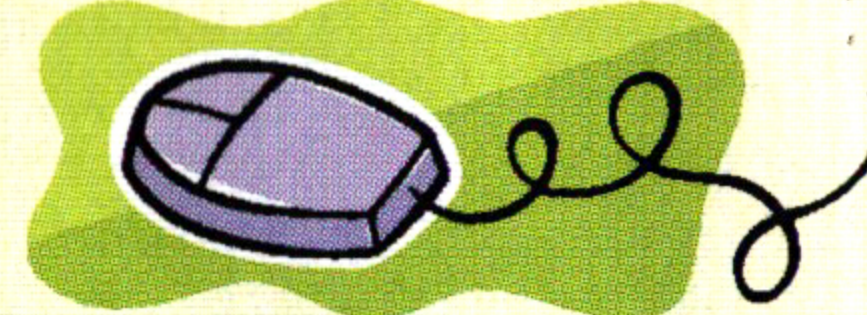


Melissa M.
Age 11, New York

e-fail \EE-fayl\ *noun*: an e-mail that gets lost in cyberspace



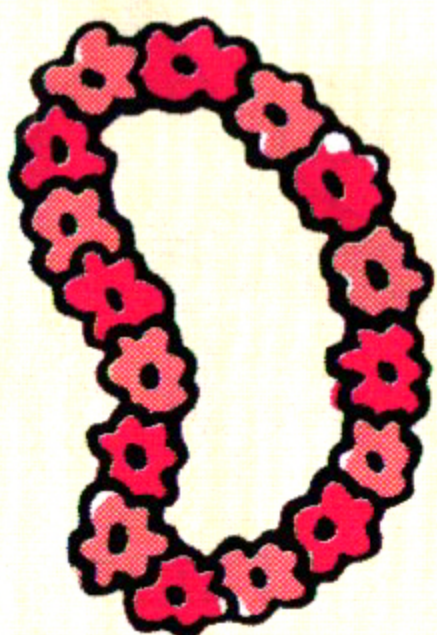
Lisa R.
Age 11, Ohio



funbusted \FUN-buhs-ted\ *adjective*: grounded



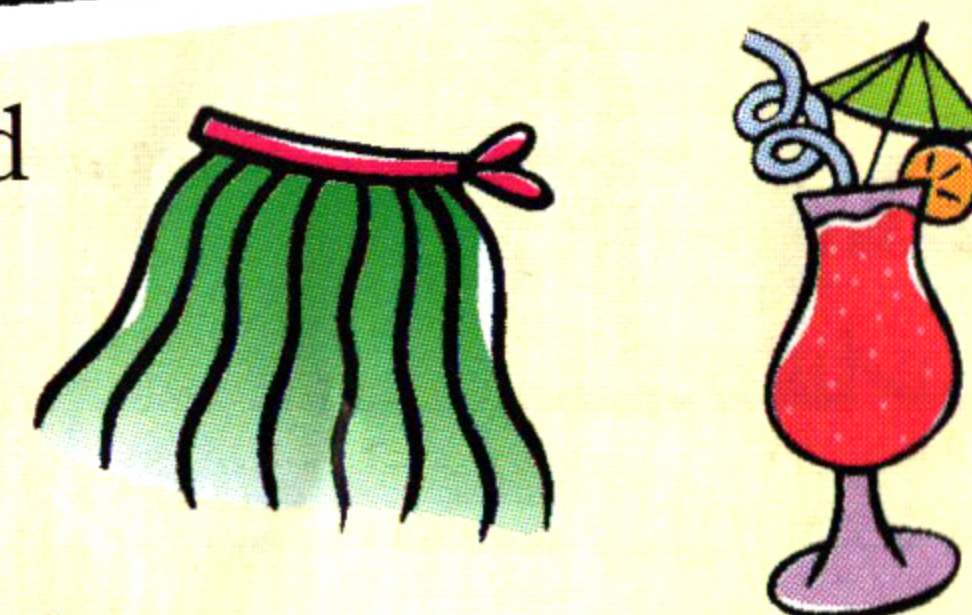
Rachael S.
Age 10, South Carolina



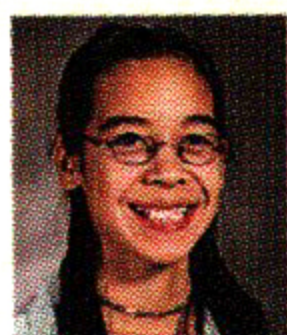
hulapaloosa\HU-lah-pah-LOO-sah*noun*: a wild Hawaiian party



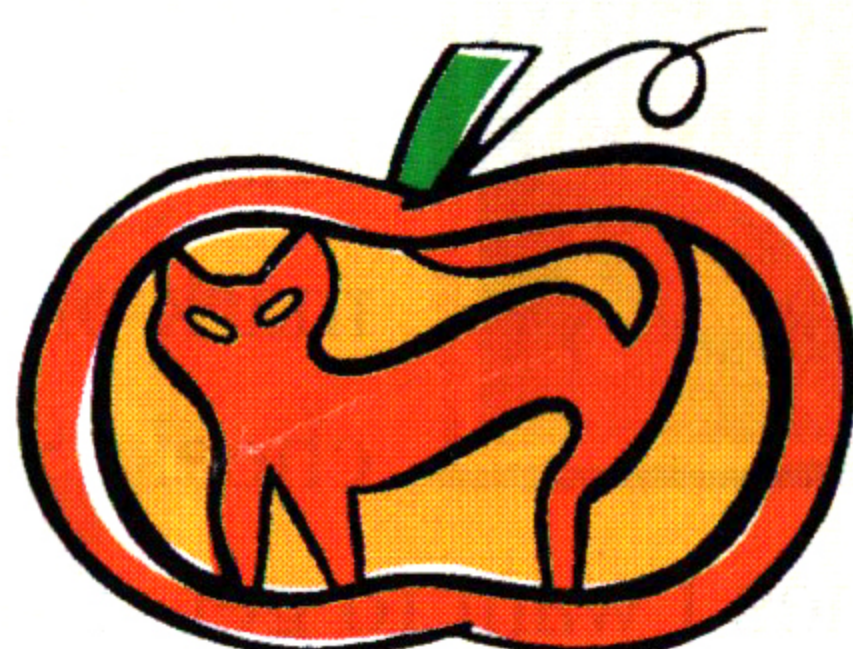
Alyssa S.
Age 9, Massachusetts



insongnia\in-SONG-nee-uh*noun*: having a song stuck in your head that you cannot get out



Bethany B.
Age 13, Ohio



pumpkeen\PUMP-keen*noun*: an awesomely carved Halloween pumpkin



Alisse B.
Age 12, California



sance\SANTS*verb*: to sing and dance at the same time



Sarah O.
Age 12, Wisconsin



yappachino\yap-uh-CHEE-no*noun*: a casual conversation or chat that takes place while the talkers drink coffee



Lauren H.
Age 11, Illinois



New Contest: Animal Look-Alikes

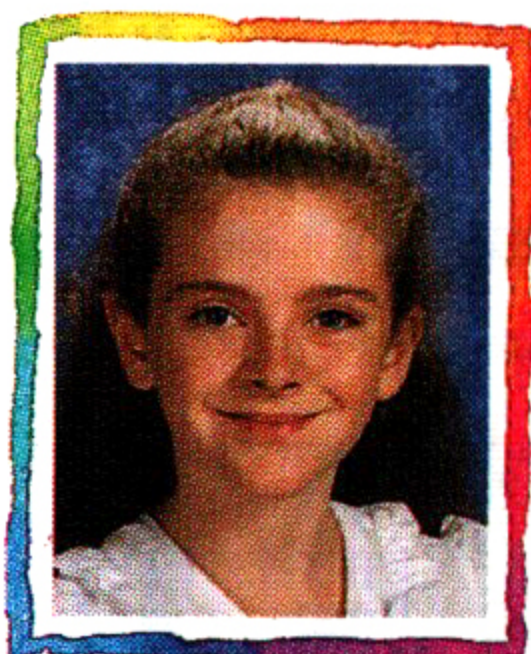
Attention, animal lovers! Do you look like your pet or another animal you know? Do you share your shaggy hairstyle with a sheepdog? Do you and your kitty have the same sparkling green eyes? Does your ponytail match your pony's tail? Send us a snapshot of you and your

animal friend, and tell us why you look alike. Mail your entry to the address on page 2, along with your first and last name, address, and birth date. Deadline: October 15, 2003. Our favorites will appear in the March/April 2004 issue. Sorry, we can't return your photos.

Heart to Heart

Self-Image

Have you ever tried to change your appearance? How can you feel good about the way you look?



I always used to worry about how I looked. Then

I saw a sign that said, "Be who you choose to be—not who others choose to see!" Now I don't care what I look like. As long as I like my appearance, that's all that matters.

Danielle F.

Age 12, Pennsylvania



I'm sensitive about my front teeth because

they are rather large and have a gap. I used to try to hide them because some people make fun of me. I know braces will help someday. Until then, I remind myself that I always look better when I smile.

Nikki P.

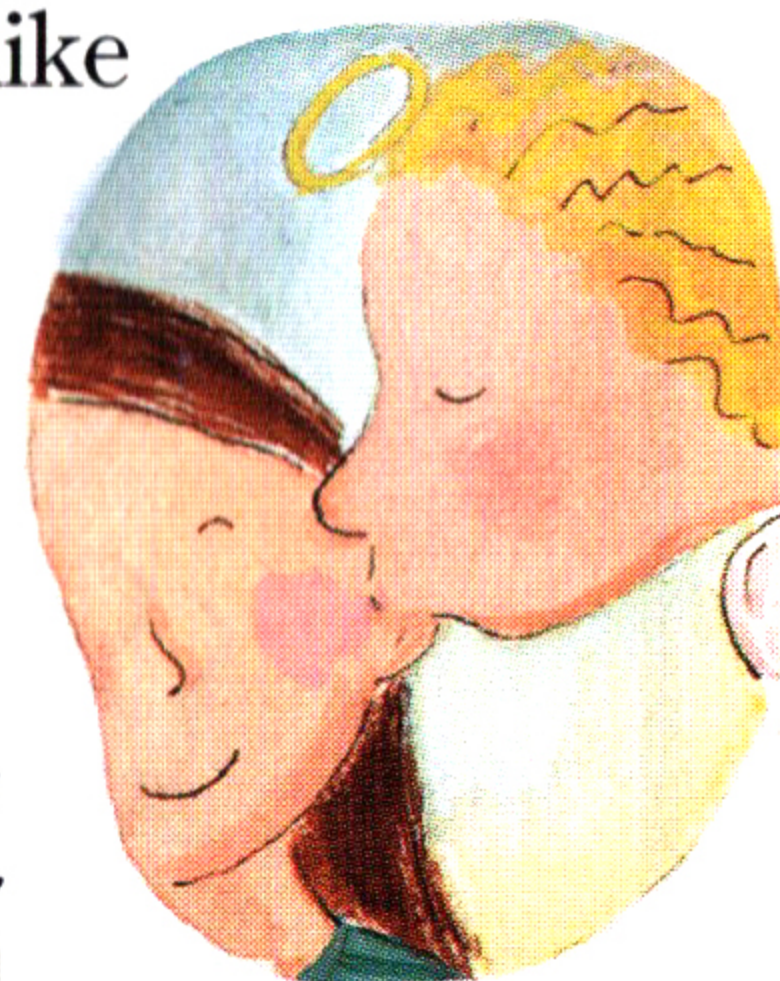
Age 12, Arizona



I have a birthmark on my left cheek. Some-

times I want to get rid of it, but I think it makes me special. I also like to pretend it's there because I was kissed

Jessica W.
Age 10, California



I wanted to have long fingernails, so I bought fake

ones. When I glued them on, I couldn't do anything! I couldn't even button my pants. I was so happy when the nails fell off.

Kelsey C.
Age 11, Indiana



Sometimes I like how I look and other times

I hate how I look. Once in a while I think, *Curly hair and freckles? What a weird combination.* But other times I think, *Curly hair and freckles? How unique!*

Paige B.
Age 9, Ohio



Most days I like the way I look, but sometimes

I want to look different. I braid my hair, wear fun jewelry, and put on clothes I haven't worn for a while. It makes me feel good, but I always know it's still me on the inside.

Jenni K.
Age 10, Oregon



I'm happy with the way I look, but it's hard to be confident when I'm surrounded by skinny girls who constantly talk about their size zero jeans. Then I remember that it doesn't matter what people see when they look at me. It only matters what they see in my heart.

Holly J.
Age 12, Kentucky



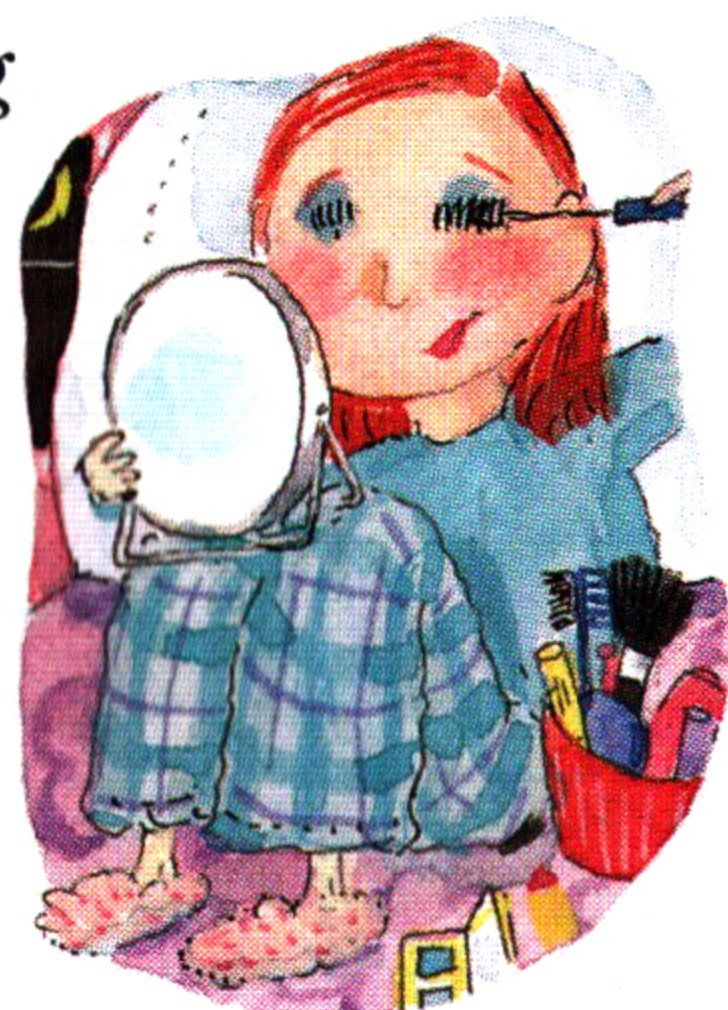
If you have a problem with your appearance, remember that your body is still growing and developing. You might like what you see in the years to come.

Katie S.
Age 12, Ohio



I didn't like the way I looked, so I stayed up until midnight trying on makeup. It backfired. The next day I had a rash!

JACKLYN C.
Age 10, California



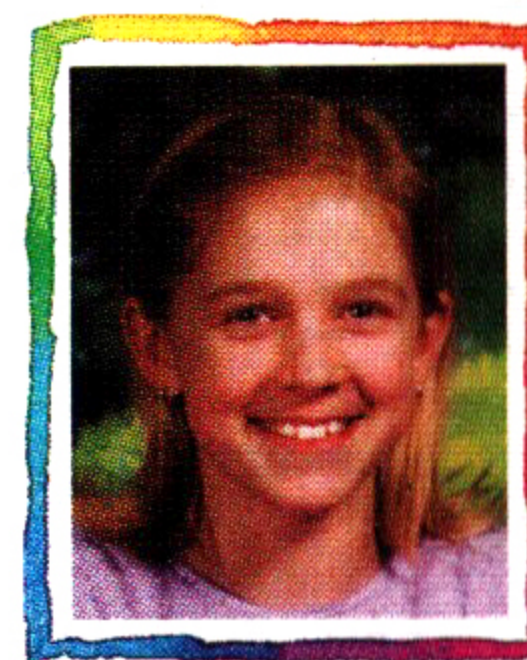
I changed my look so some girls would like me. I wore long shorts and baggy shirts. All it did was give some boys a reason to make fun of me. If people don't accept you for who you are, don't hang out with them.

Elizabeth D.
Age 12, Florida



Write a list of at least ten things you like about your looks. You'll feel better about your appearance!

Kelly W.
Age 11, Illinois



I got my hair layered because it was the new "look." I didn't like it as much as my old style. It was really hard to take care of my hair and to style it every day. I learned that what's popular is not always a good thing.

Kayla S.
Age 12, Minnesota



If you don't feel good about your appearance, look at yourself through the eyes of someone who loves you. Chances are, no matter how frizzy your hair is or how crooked your teeth are, that person thinks you're beautiful.

Arpita A.
Age 11, New Jersey

Speak from Your Heart

Next subject: Pets. What are some of the best—and worst—things about having a pet? How do you handle the responsibility? What advice do you have for girls who are thinking about getting a pet like yours?

Send answers, first and last name, birth date, and photo to the address on page 2.

Deadline: October 7, 2003.

Some answers will appear in the March/April 2004 issue. ★



School P

We asked thousands of girls what their school day is like. Answer these quick questions, then turn the page to see how your school routine stacks up!

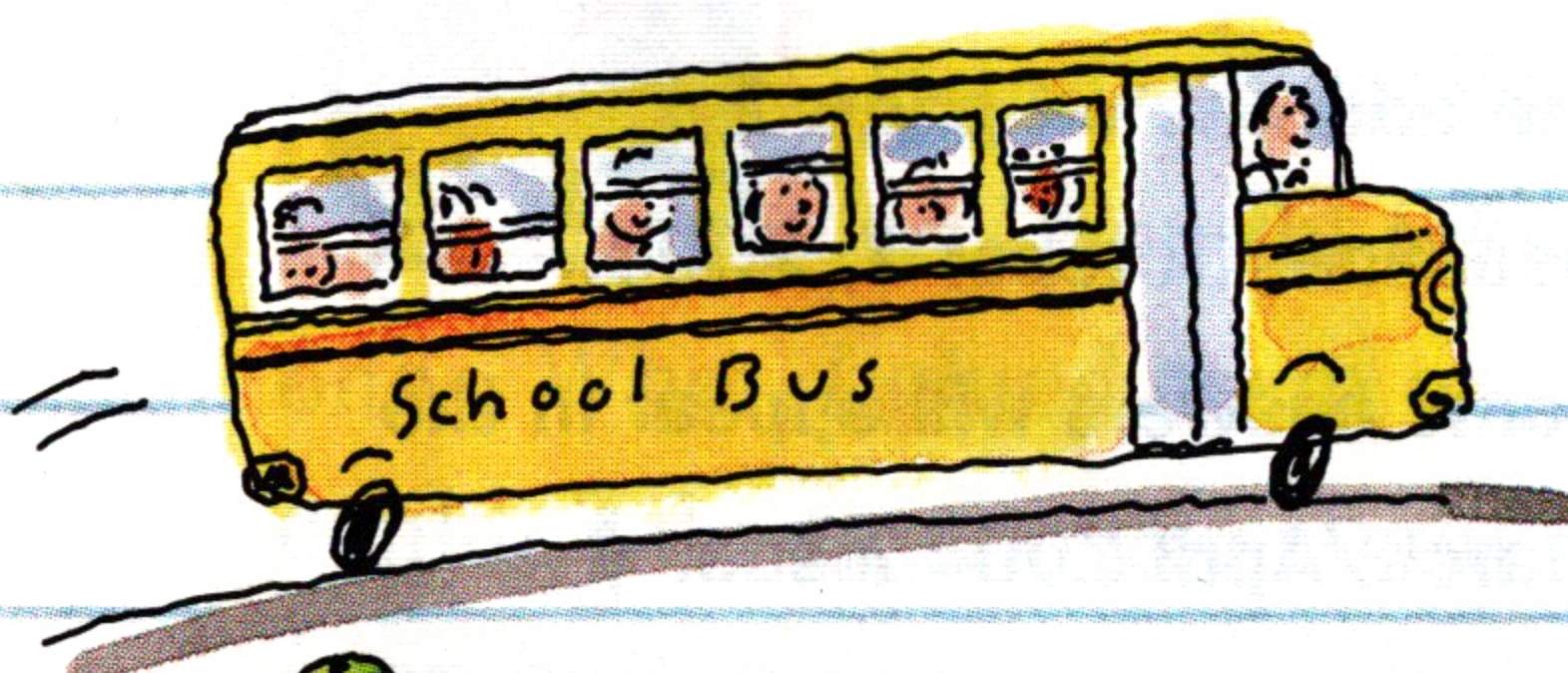
1. What kind of school do you go to?

- a. public
- b. private
- c. homeschool



2. Do you wear a school uniform?

- a. yes
- b. no



3. How do you usually get to school?

- a. my family's car or a carpool
- b. school bus
- c. walk
- d. other

4. Do you have a locker at school?

- a. yes
- b. no

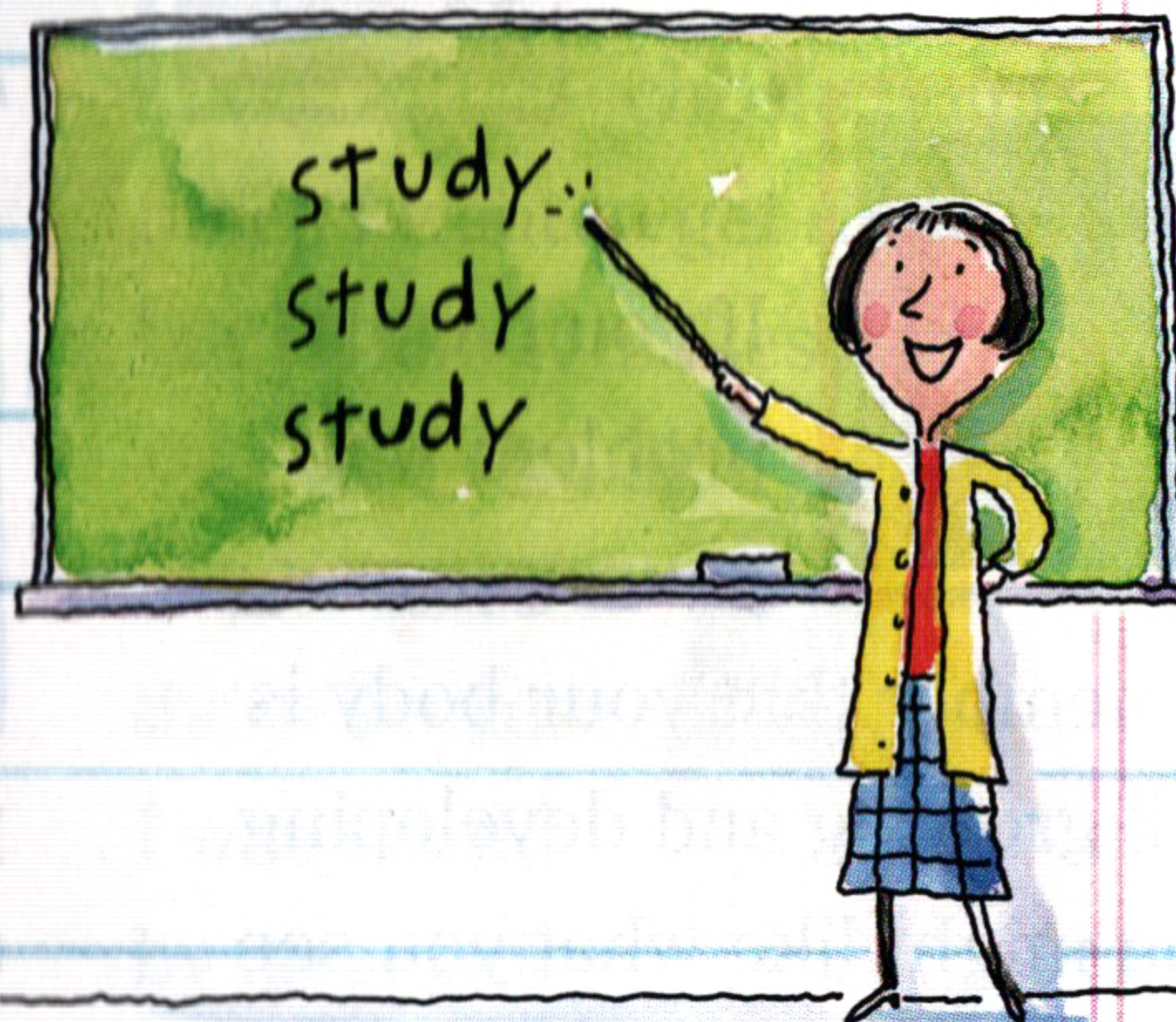
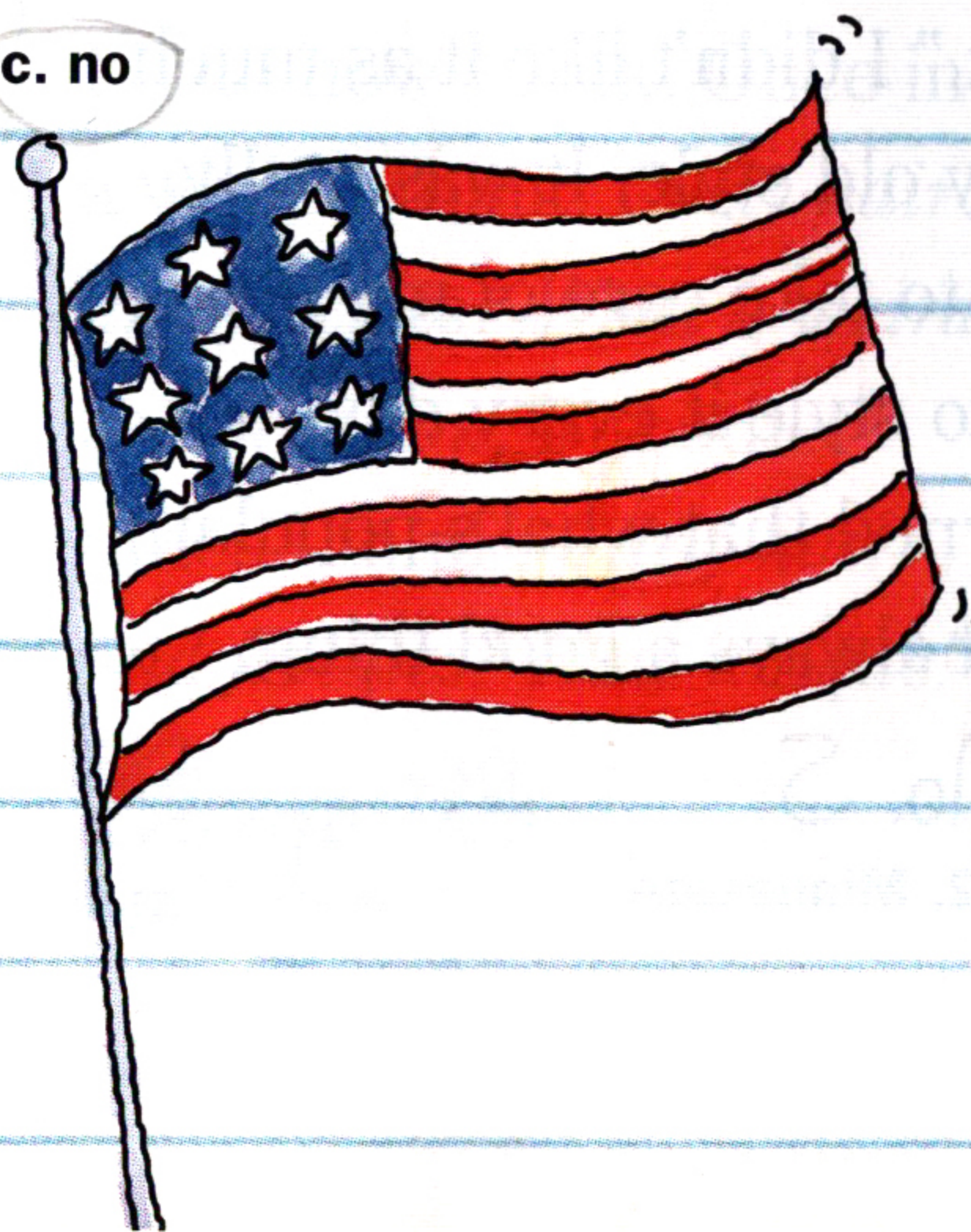


If you do have a locker, does it have a lock?

- a. yes
- b. no

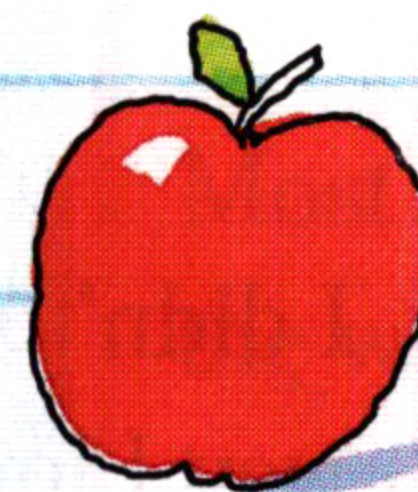
5. Do you say the Pledge of Allegiance at school?

- a. yes, every day
- b. yes, once a week
- c. no

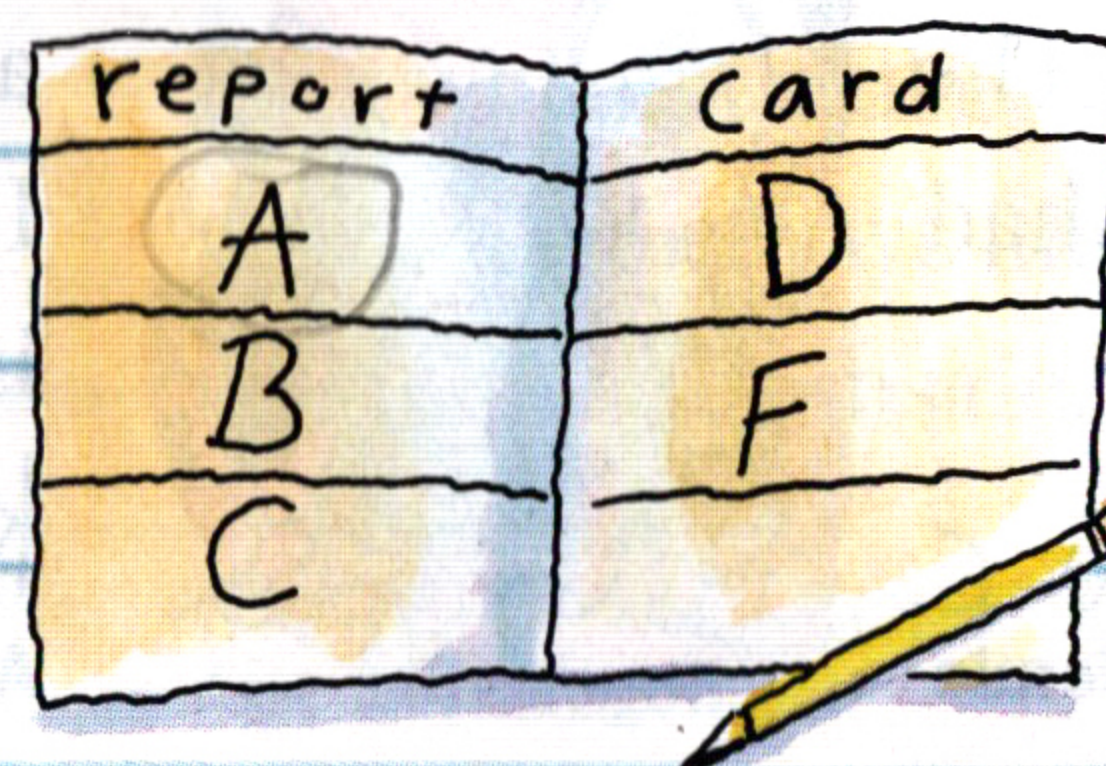


6. How many teachers do you have during a school day?

- a. one
- b. two
- c. three
- d. four or more



7. Overall, what grade would you give to your teachers?

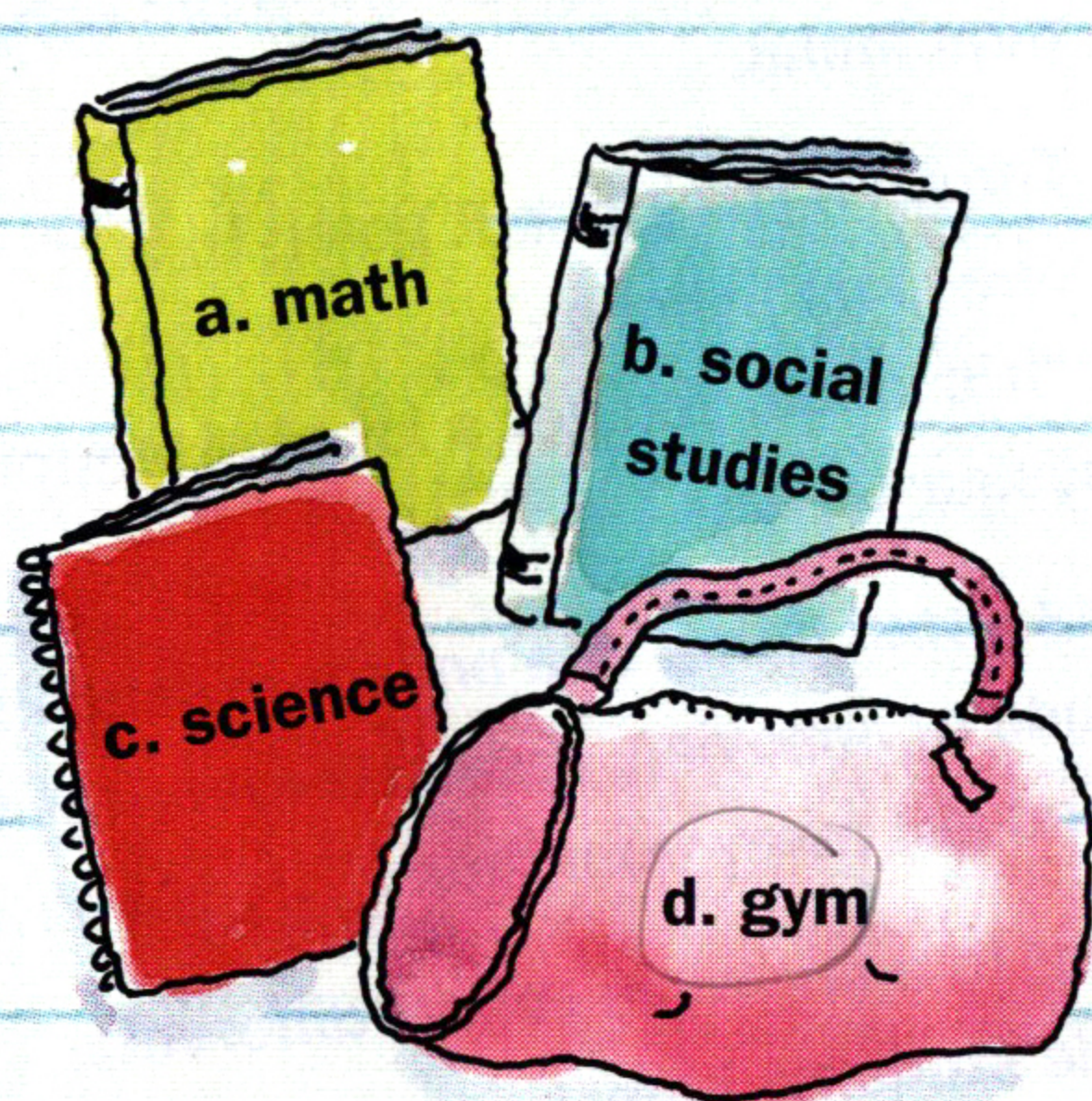


8. Do you bring your lunch to school from home, or do you buy lunch at school?

- a. bring lunch from home
- b. buy lunch at school
- c. sometimes bring lunch, sometimes buy it

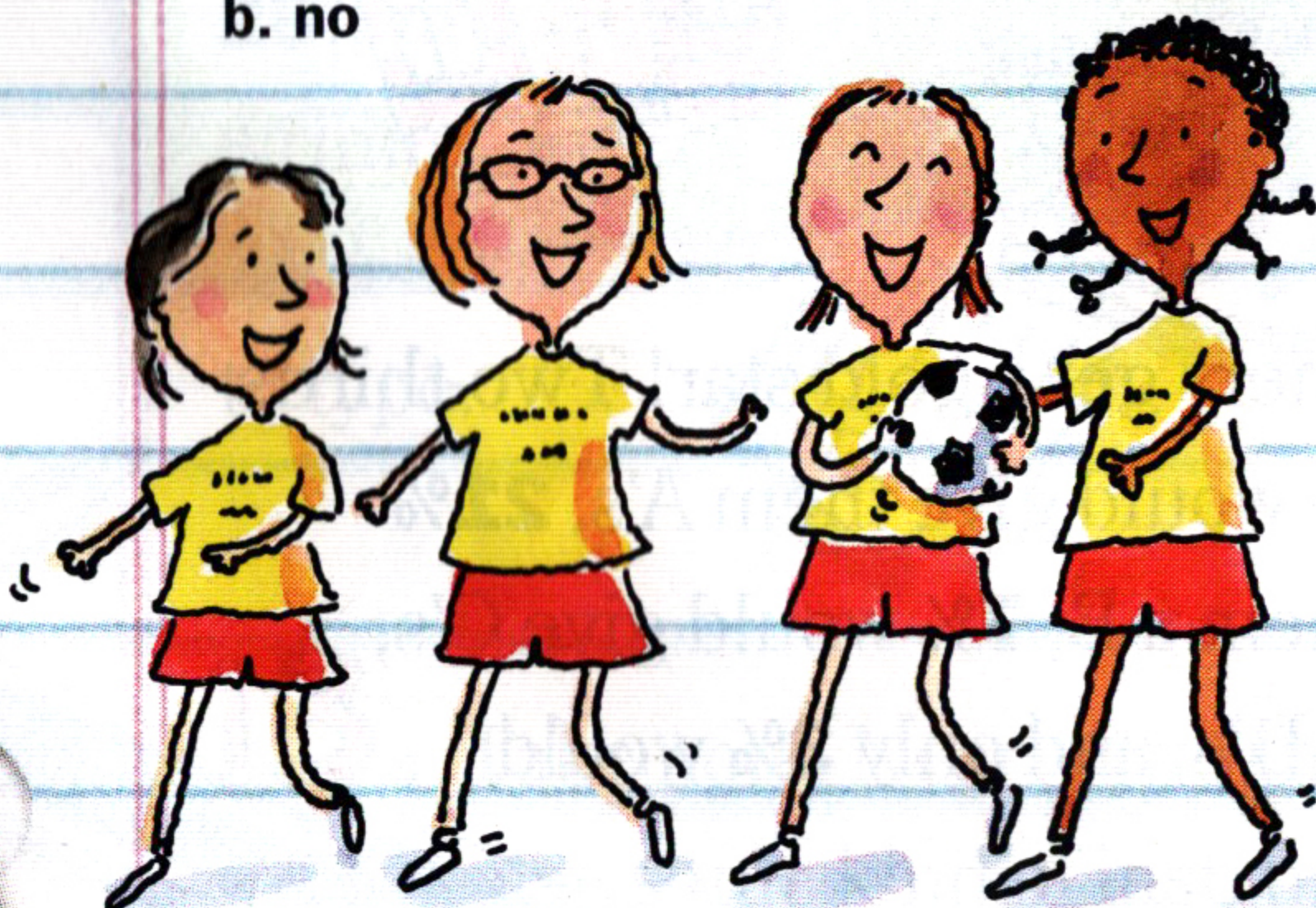


9. Which of these school subjects do you like best?



10. Do you change clothes for gym class?

- a. yes
- b. no



Bonjour!



11. Do you take a foreign language?

- a. yes
- b. no

12. How do you prefer to write?

- a. printing
- b. cursive
- c. typing

14. Does your school have a yearbook?

- a. yes
- b. no

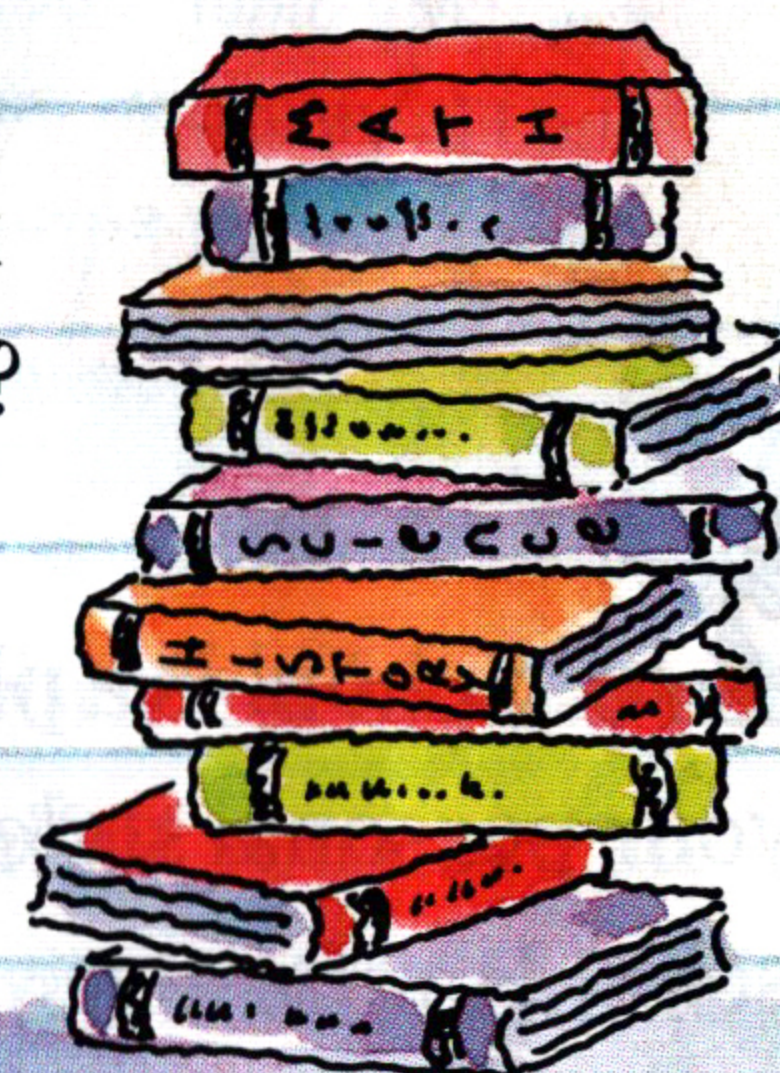


If so, are you on the yearbook staff?

- a. yes
- b. no

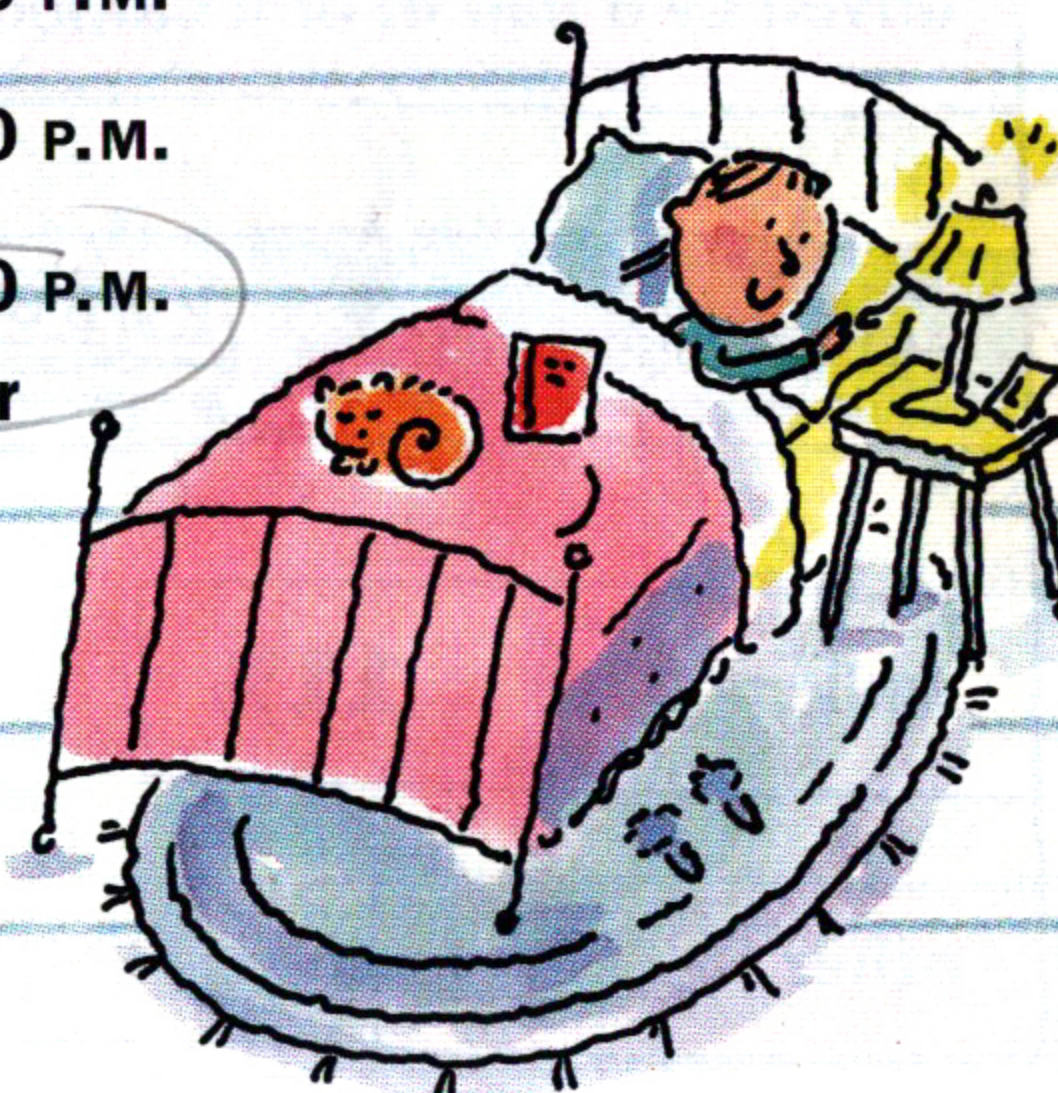
15. How long do you spend on homework each night?

- a. less than an hour
- b. an hour or longer



16. How late do you stay up on school nights?

- a. 8:00 P.M.
- b. 8:30 P.M.
- c. 9:00 P.M.
- d. 9:30 P.M. or later



What's a percent? The word *percent* and the symbol % mean "per hundred." For example,

1. Most of you—**69%**—go to public schools, but **22%** go to private schools, and **9%** stay home for school.



Meet **Ginger M.**, a 12-year-old homeschooler from Arkansas.

The best thing about being homeschooled:

Ginger loves having her mom as her teacher. "She knows what pushes

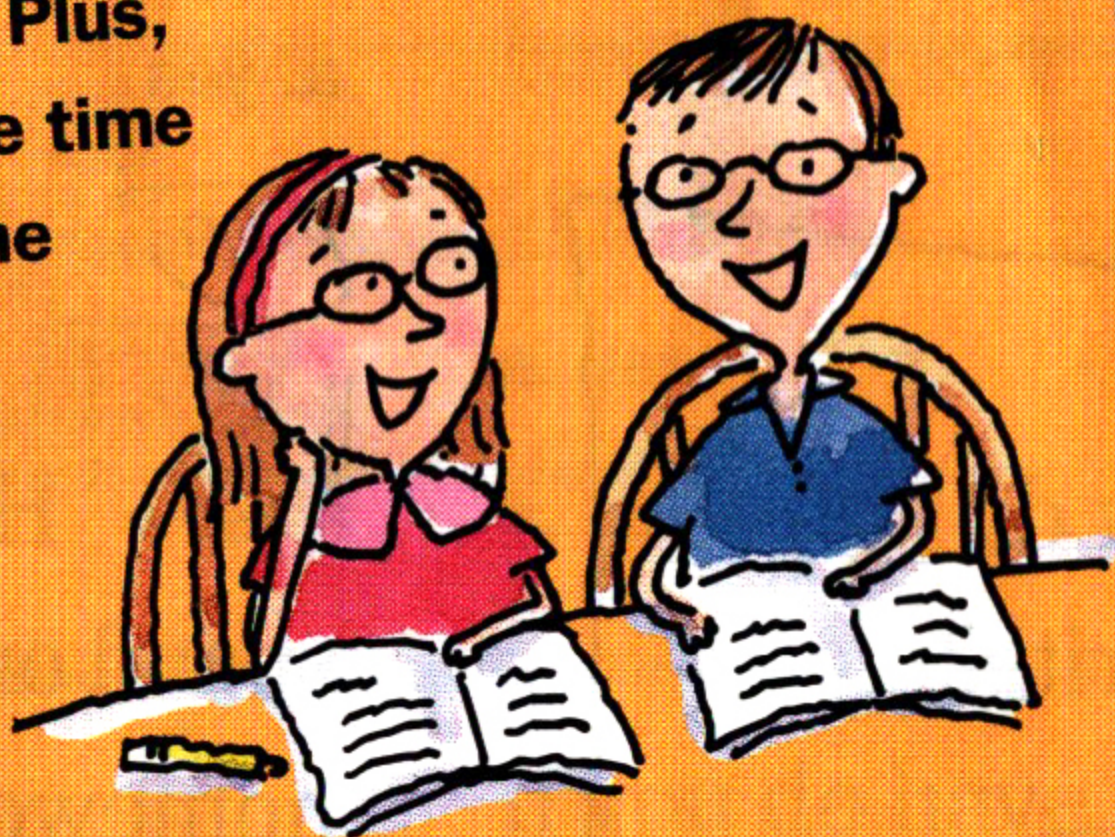
my buttons and what I struggle with," Ginger says.

The worst thing about being homeschooled:

"We don't have snow days!" Ginger laughs.

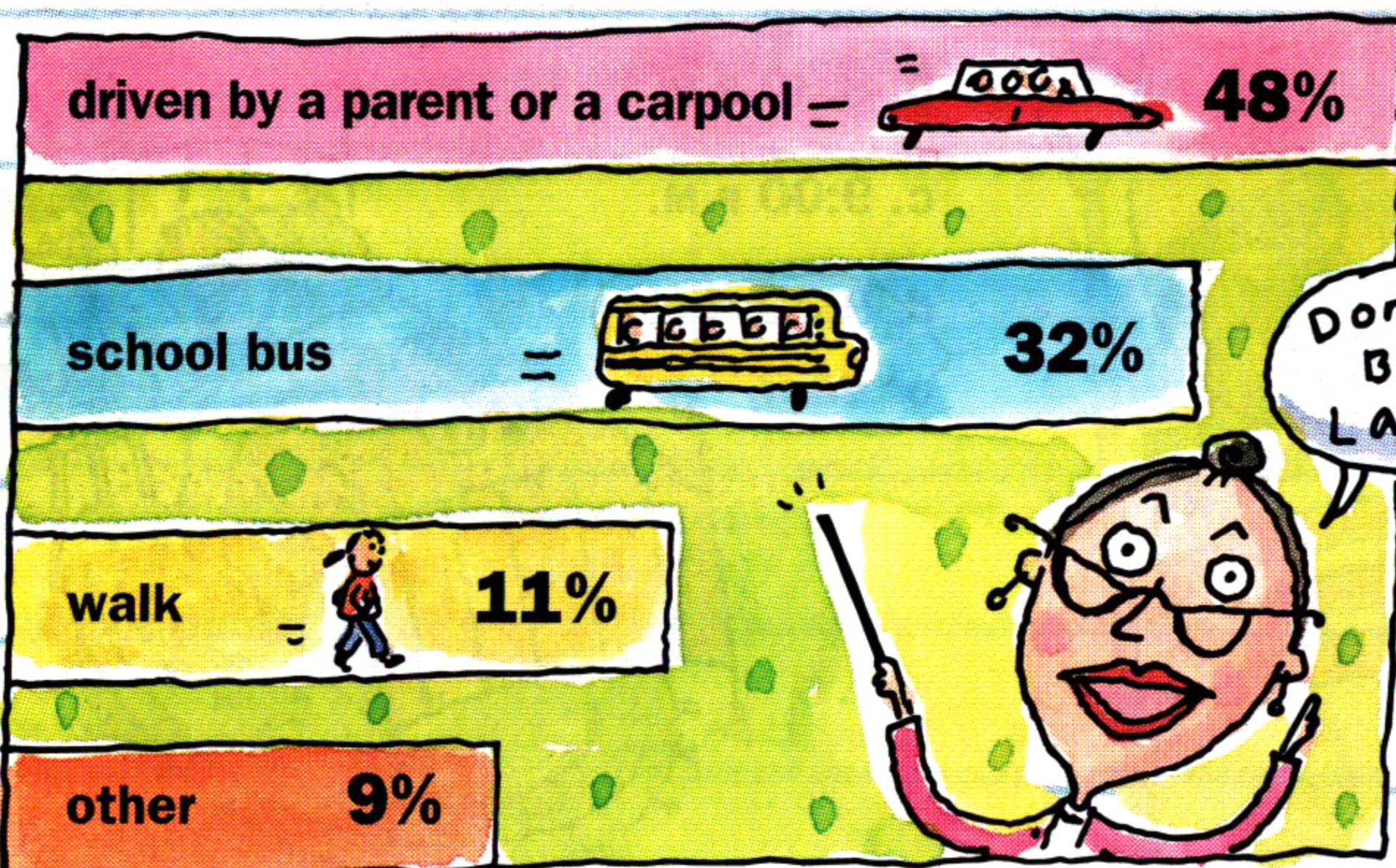
Why homeschooling is unique:

Ginger gets to sink her teeth into her favorite subjects. She loves writing, for example, so she writes a column for her local newspaper. Plus, Ginger spends a lot more time with her siblings than she would if they were in separate classrooms all day. "My older brother and I have grown really close," Ginger says.



2. School is a place where you show your personal style. Only **25%** of you wear school uniforms.

3. How do you get to school? Most of you go along for the ride. Not many of you walk or bike to school.



4. It's a deadlock on lockers—half of you have 'em and half don't. But if you've got a locker, it's usually a safe place to keep your stuff—**63%** of you with lockers say they do lock.

5. You're proud to say the pledge. Nearly **70%** of you say the Pledge of Allegiance at school every day, and only **20%** never recite the pledge at school.

6. When it comes to teachers, you're used to variety. More than half of you—**51%**—learn from four or more different teachers every school day!



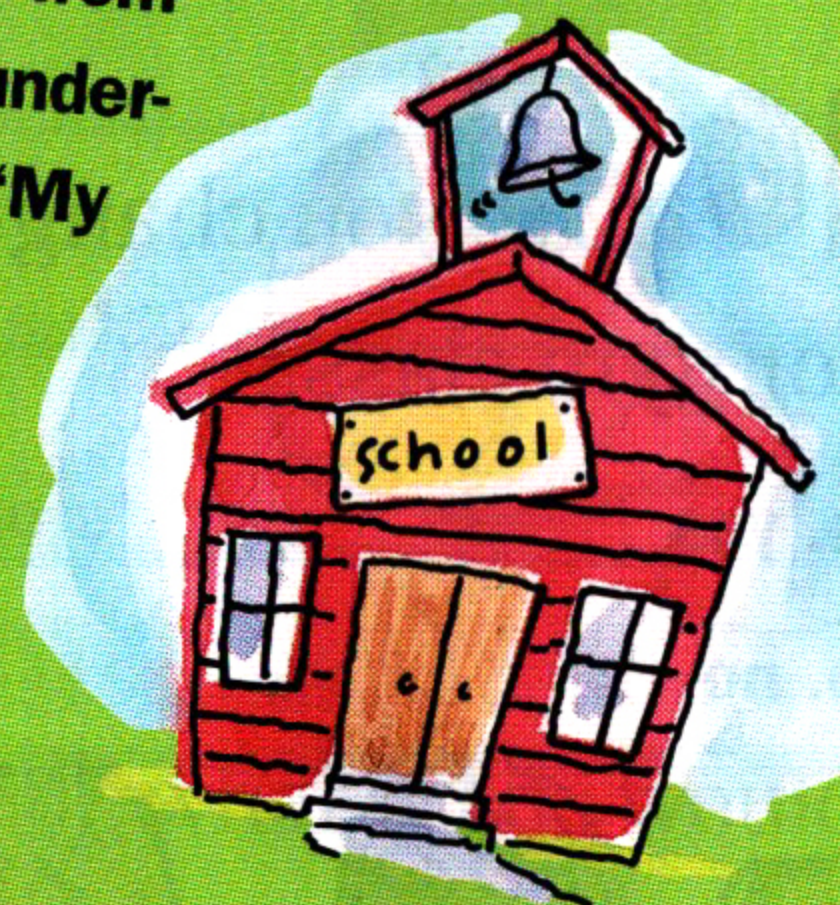
Meet **Jessica G.**, 9, who has the same teacher all day at her **one-room school** in rural Idaho.

The best thing about going to a one-room school:

"It's small, you get a lot of attention, and it's fun!" Jessica says.

The hardest thing about going to a one-room school: When kids act rude or annoying, Jessica never gets to switch classes and get away from them.

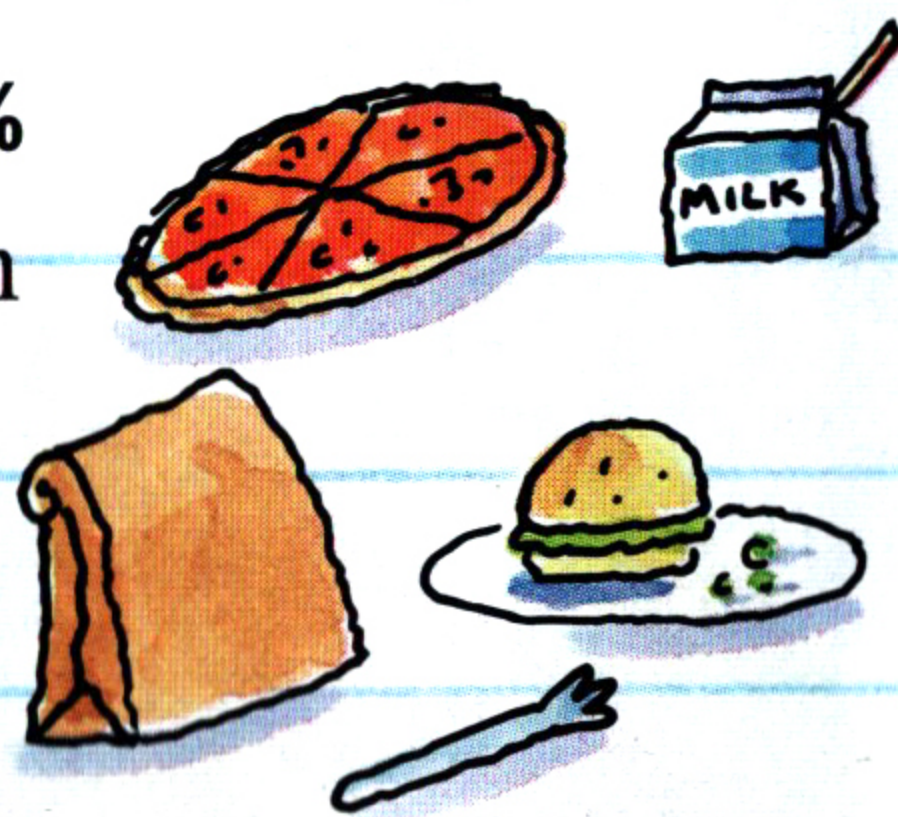
What makes going to a one-room school different: Learning alongside students from other grades helps Jessica understand what she's studying. "My friend is in 5th grade, and sometimes we do science projects together," Jessica explains. "She teaches me things I don't know. It's fun!"



7. Your teachers get a gold star! Two-thirds of you—**67%**—would give them A's, **21%** would grade them a B, **7%** would give C's, **2%** would give D's, and only **3%** would flunk them.

if 32% of girls say they take the bus to school, that means that 32 out of every 100 ride the school bus.

8. Hungry? About **24%** of you usually buy lunch at school, **34%** bring it from home, and **42%** do both.



9. You jump for joy when gym class rolls around! In fact, **37%** of you picked P. E. as your top school subject, while **22%** chose science, **21%** went for math, and **20%** favored social studies. What do you like *least* about school? Getting up early.



10. Make sure your school clothes are sporty. Most of you—**55%**—don't change into special clothes for gym class.

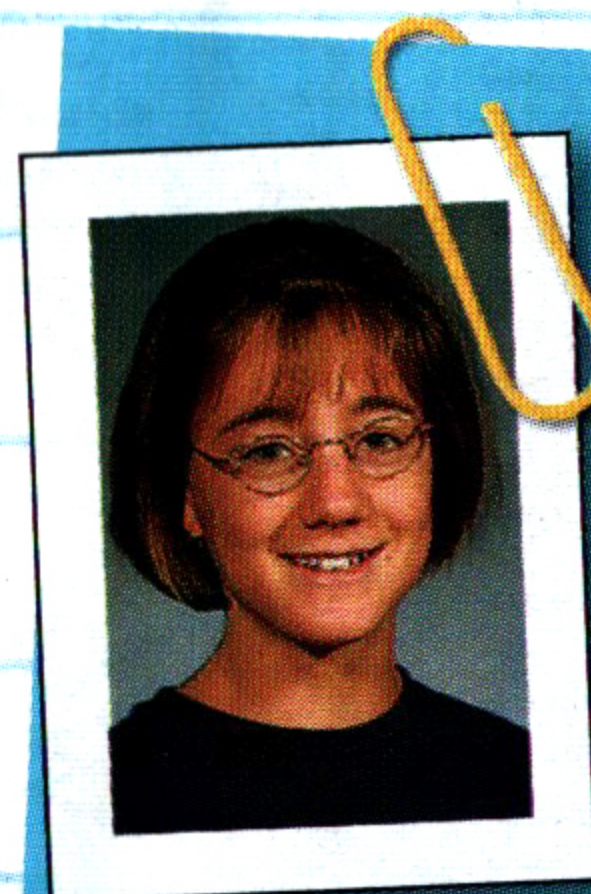
11. Almost half of you—**46%**—study a foreign language. *Bueno!*

12. Write on! Just less than half of you—**47%**—prefer to print, **28%** use cursive writing, and **25%** like to type.



13. Take note! Nearly two-thirds of you—**65%**—play some kind of instrument.

14. You like to keep track and look back at every school year. Most of you—**83%**—have a yearbook, and about **13%** of you work on the yearbook staff.



Meet **Emily L.**, 14, who works on her school's **yearbook staff**.

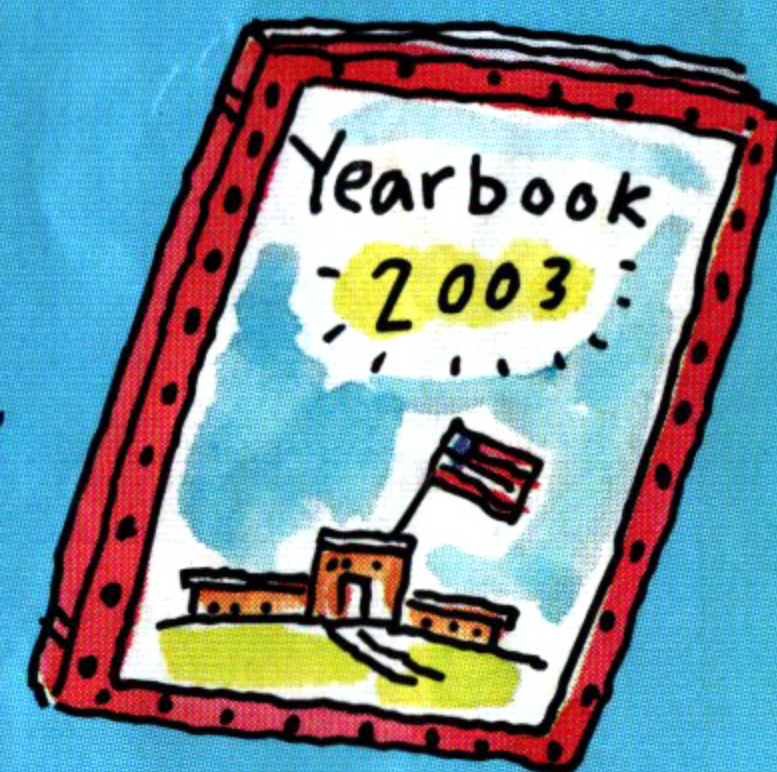
The best thing about working on the yearbook:

"My favorite part of my job is running around taking pictures," Emily says. "I try to catch kids doing everything!"

The hardest thing about working on the yearbook: According to Emily, using computers to lay out the pages of the yearbook can be a challenge. "I'd never done it before, and there's a lot to remember," she explains. "But I've learned a lot about the computer."

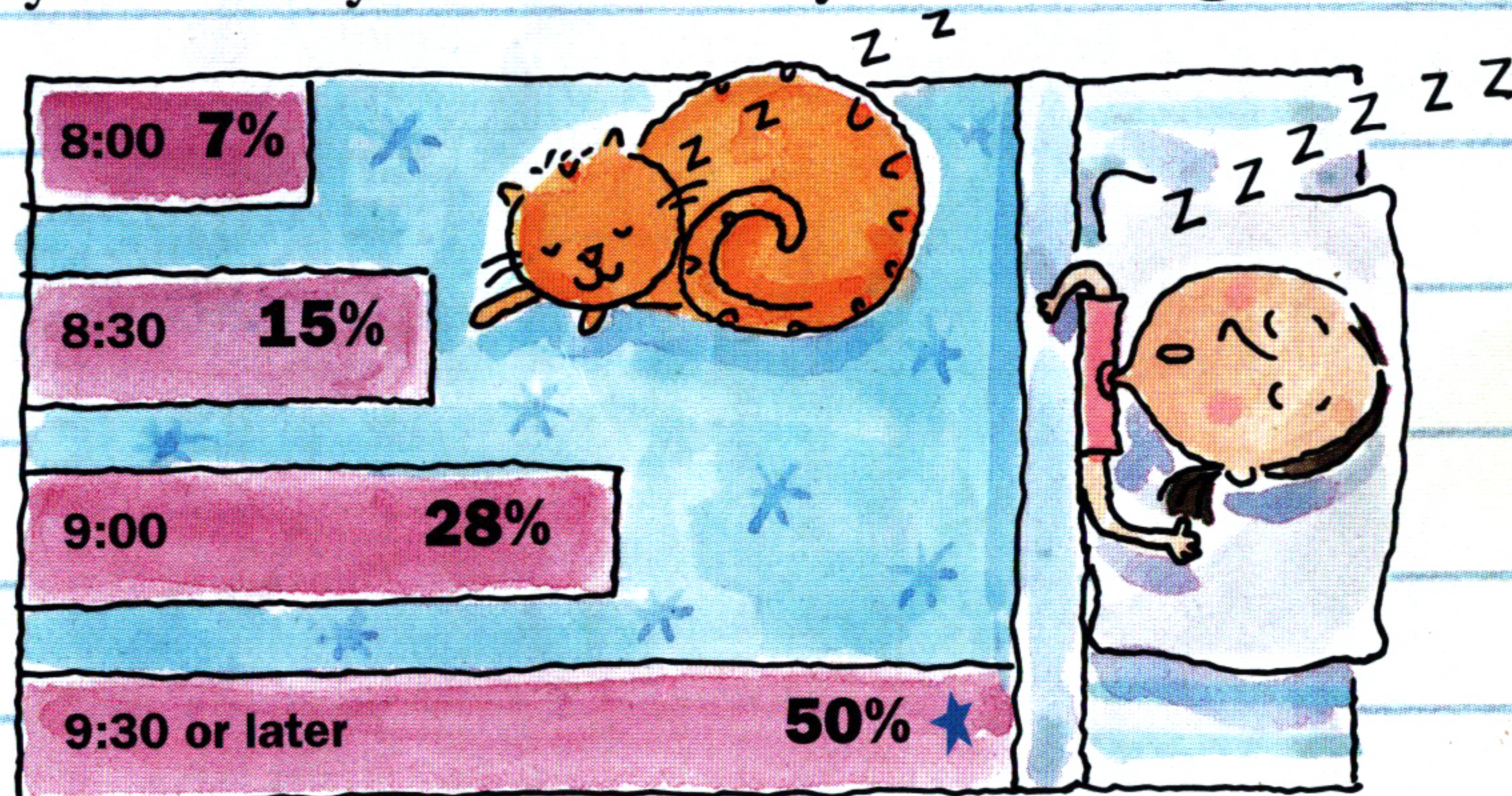
Why the yearbook is important to Emily and her school:

"During the school year, a lot of fun things happen, and it's just hard to remember all of it," Emily says. "I like being able to look back."



15. Like it or not, homework is a big part of your school life. About half of you have an hour or more of homework each night, while the rest have less.

16. After a busy school day, you need your shut-eye. Here's when you call it a night:



Looking Back

Fun Fashion Facts

by Aline Alexander Newman

Girls have gone to extremes to keep up with fashion, from **perfect pleats** to **platform shoes**. Can you match each outfit to the accessory that would have been worn with it?



4

1976



5

1992



6

2003



D



E



F



Credits on page 2.

Answers

1 E. Young screen star Shirley Temple set the style for **1930s** girls. All around the world, children wore their hair in pretty ringlets like hers. Shirley's simple, short dresses were easy for moms to copy during the penny-pinching days of the Great Depression. This cat pin made of Bakelite, one of the first kinds of plastic, might have topped off a girl's cute Shirley Temple look.

2 A. In the **1940s**, stores and catalogues began selling girls a kind of men's moccasins called penny loafers. These comfortable shoes slipped on and off without being

tied, and they looked great with the cute cuffed jeans girls were starting to wear. Many girls slipped pennies into the pockets on their loafers for luck—and a practical few slipped in dimes, to make sure they always had spare change for a phone call!

3 F. Dresses called shirtwaists, with fitted tops and full, pleated skirts, were all the rage after World War Two. At the same time, designers began experimenting with new uses for plastic. When **1950s** girls really wanted to dress up, they added necklaces and bracelets made out of plastic pop-it beads. A fun fad, the

beads came in many colors. Girls simply snapped them together to make jewelry whatever length they wanted.

4 D. To fit in with the back-to-the-past fashion craze of the **1970s**, many girls wore patchwork-printed granny dresses. But their look wasn't totally folksy. Underneath the dresses, girls clomped around in platform shoes with extra-thick soles. Platforms have cycled in and out of fashion ever since the Middle Ages.

5 B. Girls of the **1990s** practically lived in leggings made from super-stretchy fabrics developed during the

decade. Girls wore the clingy pants everywhere—even to school, where they traded friendship bracelets they wove themselves from embroidery floss. These cute bracelets were the decade's hottest friendship fad.

6 C. Pretty peasant tops from **2003** flow like the Bohemian styles of the 1960s and 1970s. The decorated flip-flops modern girls pair with practically any outfit recall fashions of the 1970s, too, when beach-loving girls wore the simple squishy foam slides. This casual style was originally inspired by sandals worn in Japan for centuries. ★

Friendship Troubles

Fights. Hurt feelings. Misunderstandings. Almost all friendships hit some tough times sooner or later. Here's how to deal with friendship troubles—and be a good friend yourself.

by Patti Kelley Criswell



True Friend Test

Friends can be fun, but not every friendship is right for you. How do your buddies measure up?
Picture a friend in your mind and ask yourself these questions about her:

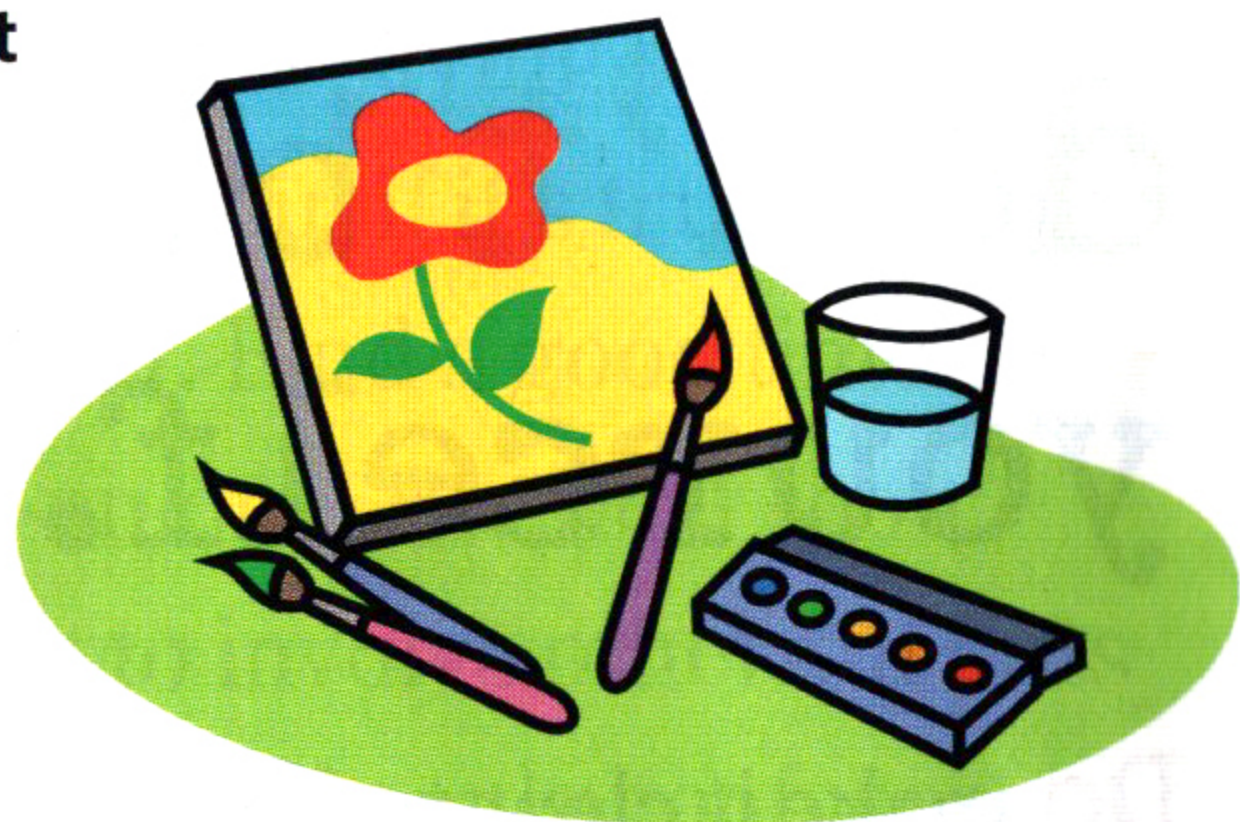
1. After we're together, I feel happy and good about myself.

Yes ☒ No ☐



2. When something good happens, she's the first one I want to tell, because I know she'll be really excited for me.

Yes ☒ No ☐



3. We can sit and work on a project or watch TV and not say a word—it never feels awkward.

Yes ☒ No ☐

4. I can make a total fool of myself, and she won't cut me down for it.

Yes ☒ No ☐

5. She brings out the best in me.

Yes ☒ No ☐

6. When I say, "O.K., we'll do it your way," it doesn't feel like I'm giving in because chances are the last time we disagreed, she did things my way.

Yes ☒ No ☐



7. When I'm angry about something and just need to talk, she'll listen.

Yes ☒ No ☐



8. I would stand up for her, and I know she'd do the same for me.

Yes ☒ No ☐

9. When she's sad or upset, I feel bad and want to help in any way I can.

Yes ☒ No ☐

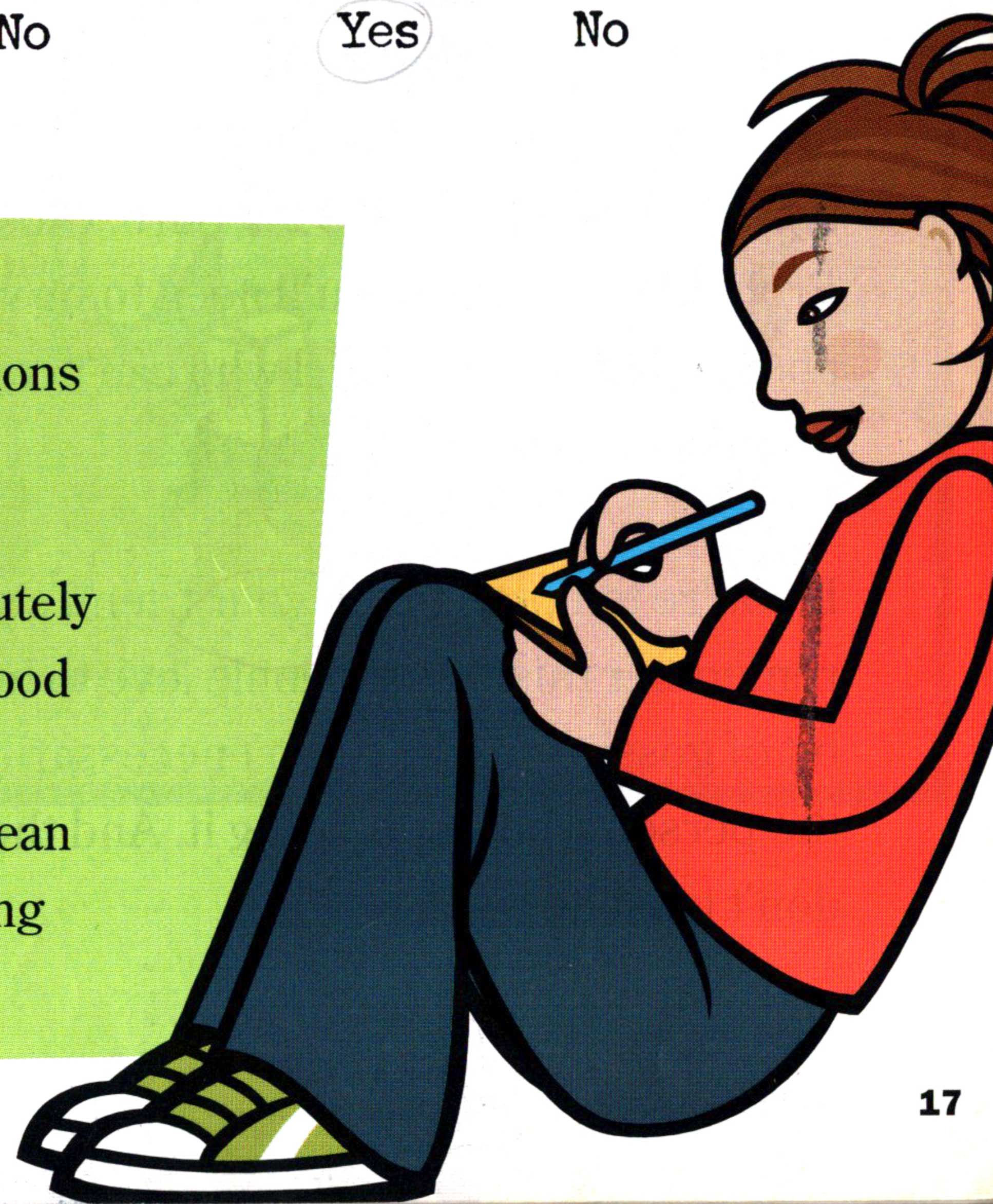
10. We never run out of things to talk about.

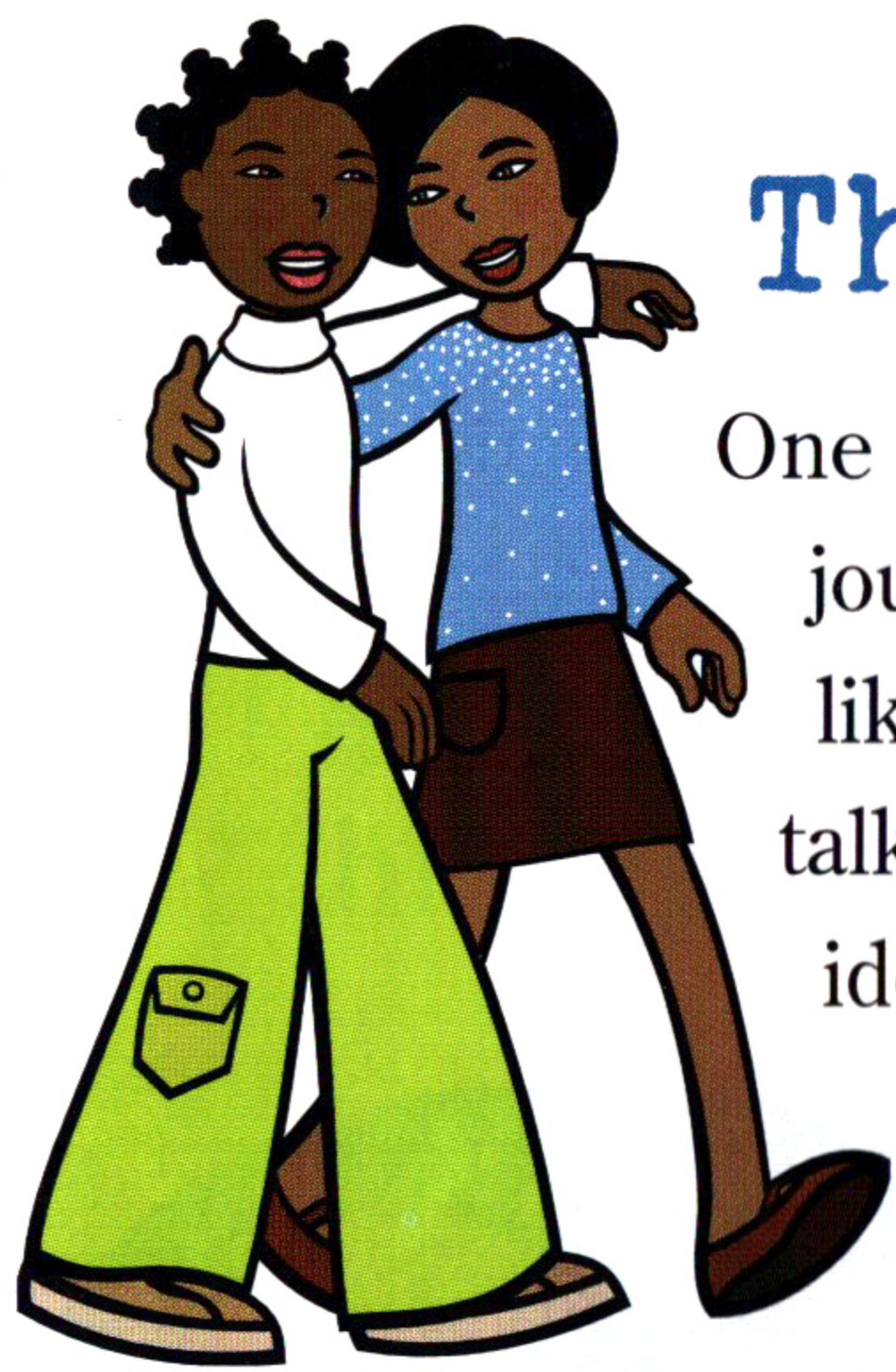
Yes ☒ No ☐

Answers:

The girl who makes you say **yes** to most of these questions is a friend through and through. **Hold on to her.**

And the others? Well, it's the rare friendship that's absolutely perfect. But a whole lot of **no's** by a girl's name is not a good sign. Just because you've been friends with a girl for a long time or because you spend a lot of time together doesn't mean a friendship is true-blue. Turn the page for advice on dealing with different kinds of friend troubles.





The On-Again, Off-Again Friend

One day she lets you read her journal. The next day she acts like you don't exist. She's not talking to you, so you have no idea why she's upset. How can you solve a problem when you don't know what it is?

Some **do's** and **don'ts**:

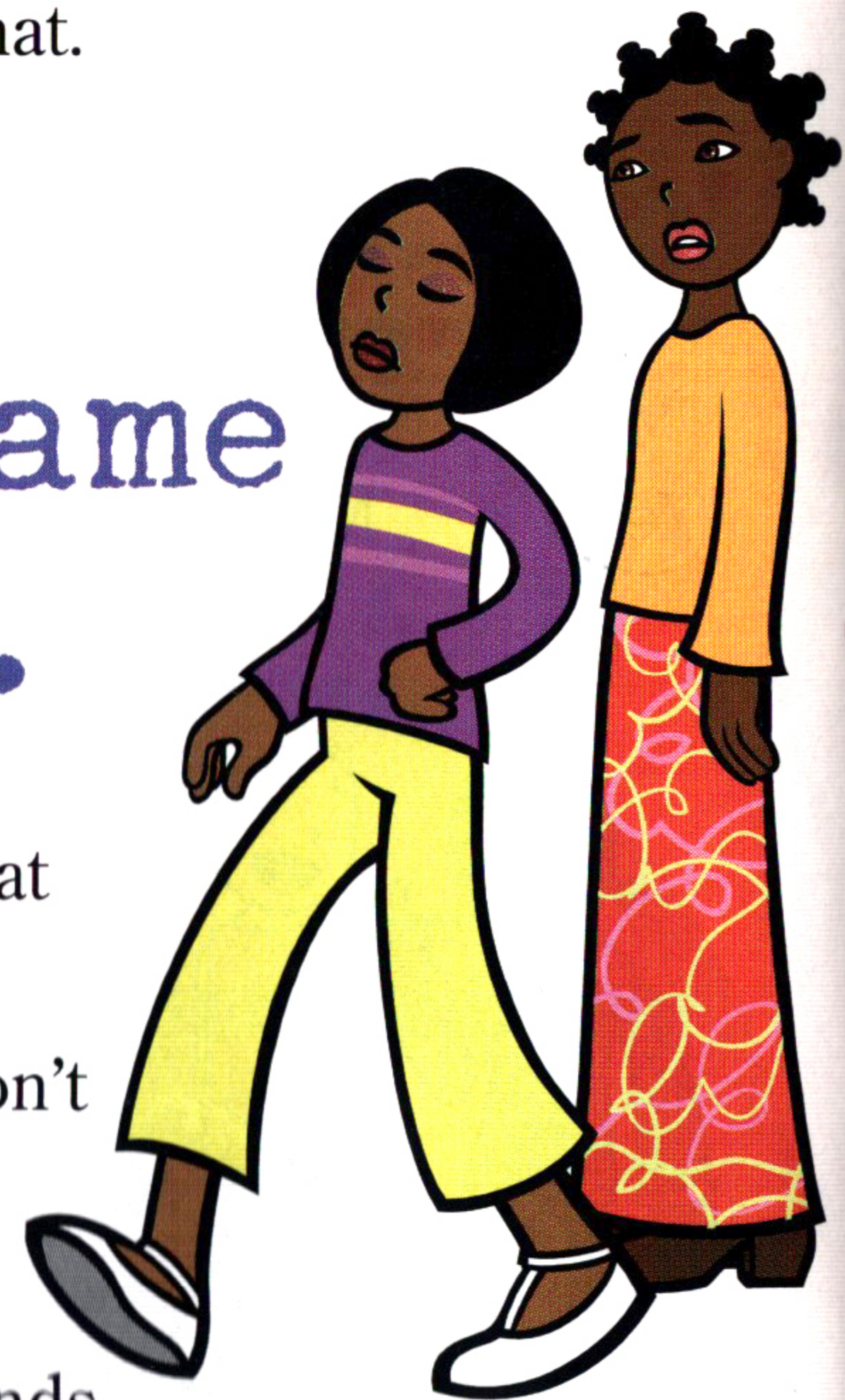
Don't try to get revenge by doing the same things she's doing to you. Anger can spread and make things much worse.

Don't fall apart. If you cry and beg her to tell you what's wrong, you'll look like a bucket of

Jell-O in July, and it will only make her feel more powerful. If she thinks she can control you, she'll try to do just that.

Don't, don't, don't blame yourself.

Do make it clear to her that you want to be her friend. Tell her calmly that you don't like what she's doing and that things will have to change for you to stay friends.



The Loose-Lipped Friend

Trust is the glue that holds a friendship together. If you've got a friend who thinks it's more important to look cool than to keep your secrets, she's way off base. **Is it possible to be friends with her?** Sure. Close friends? Probably not, since you'll need to be very careful about what you tell a girl who can't control her impulse to blab.

If you're tempted to tell your friend's secrets, remember this: Most people love to hear a juicy bit of gossip, but they don't necessarily respect the person who's spreading it. And they definitely don't trust her.



The Backstabber

Her hyena laugh is really bugging me.

What's up with those shoes?

If you hear that your friend is saying terrible things about you, first find out if it's true. Go to your friend and talk to her. Find a good time when you can talk one-on-one. But do it soon; don't let it slide. Try not to involve others. It puts them in the middle and usually only confuses things. If you deserve an apology, ask for one.

Are you a backstabber? Truth is, at one time or another, most of us give in to the temptation to bring other people down. It makes us feel better than they are, more powerful. But that feeling is short-lived. **Stabbing a friend in the back is never a good decision.** All it's going to do is lose you the trust of those around you.

Stop the backstabbing,
now!

Here's how:

- Assume that everything you say behind a person's back will get back to her.
- If talk turns mean, change the subject. Chances are people will do the same for you.
- Watch what you put in writing. Letters, notes, and e-mails have a way of sprouting wings and getting into the wrong hands.
- Stop. Think about what you're going to say before you say it.



Talk It Out

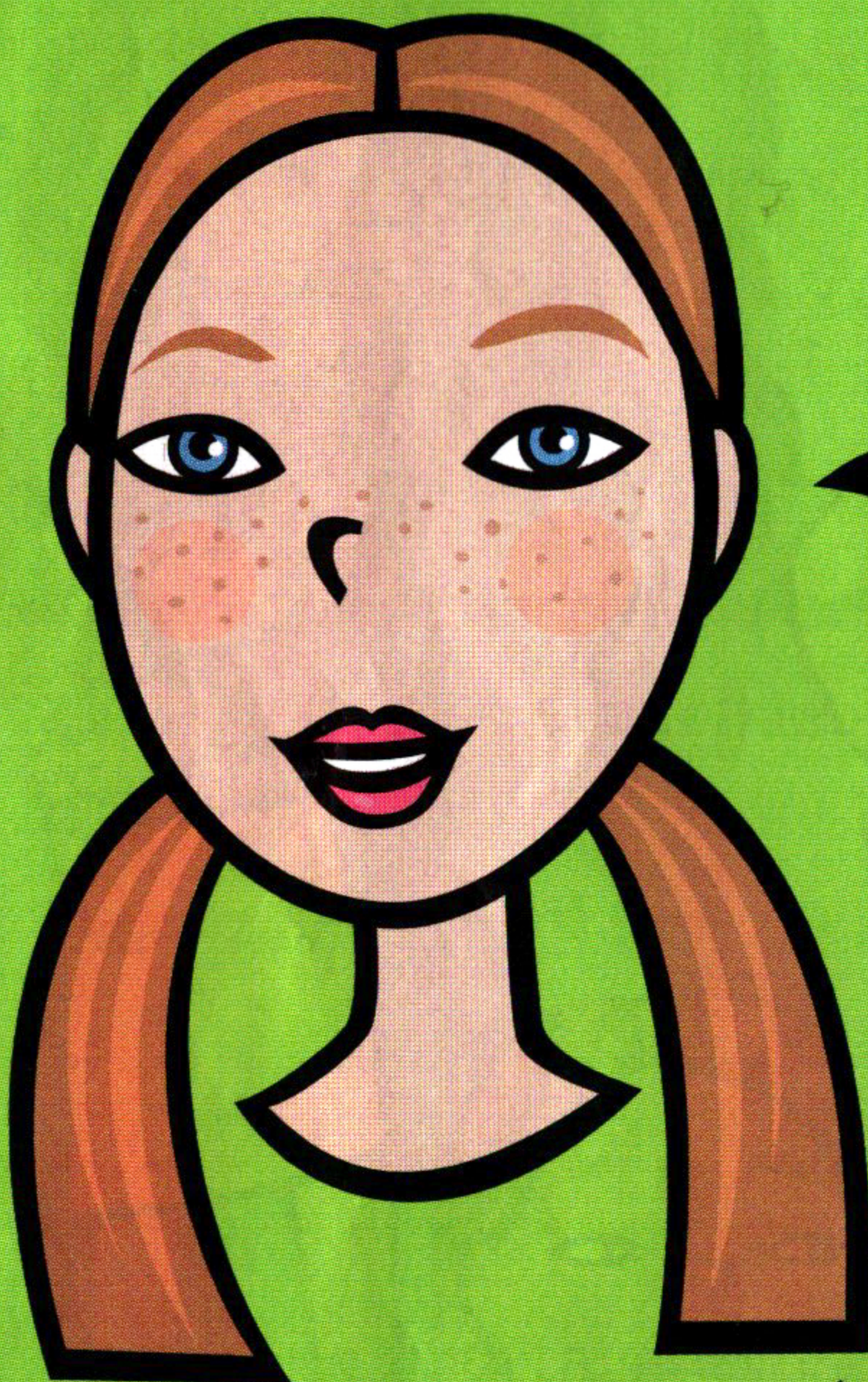
When you and a friend are having problems, it can help to talk. If you decide to talk about what's happened and how you feel, try not to back your friend up against a wall—at least if you want to resolve things. This talk doesn't

have to be a fight, even if your feelings (and hers) are running high. It's all in your approach. Here are some ways to start.



Can we talk?

Says "I want to resolve things."




How do you see what happened?

Says that you know she has a point of view, and you're willing to hear it.


Remember the other day? Well, it's been bothering me. I was really hurt by ...

Being specific gives you two a problem to solve together.




I don't get what you mean ... Could you explain it to me?

Says "I'm trying to cut you some slack."



Maybe we have to agree to disagree on that.

Says "I respect your opinion and can compromise some—but I expect my opinions to be respected, too."



Our friendship means a lot to me, and I want to work this out.

Says "I'm willing to do my part if you're willing to do yours."



Feeling Good About Yourself

No matter what your friends think about you, what matters is what you think about yourself. You want to be confident about who you are and what you believe in. **When you're confident, you feel safe and in control of your life.**

How do you get to be confident? Listen to the wise girl inside you. Don't stay with lousy friends just because you don't want to be alone. Being alone now and then in life is good. It helps you understand yourself in a new way. And when you're happier with yourself, you've set the stage for really good friendships.

Friends Forever?

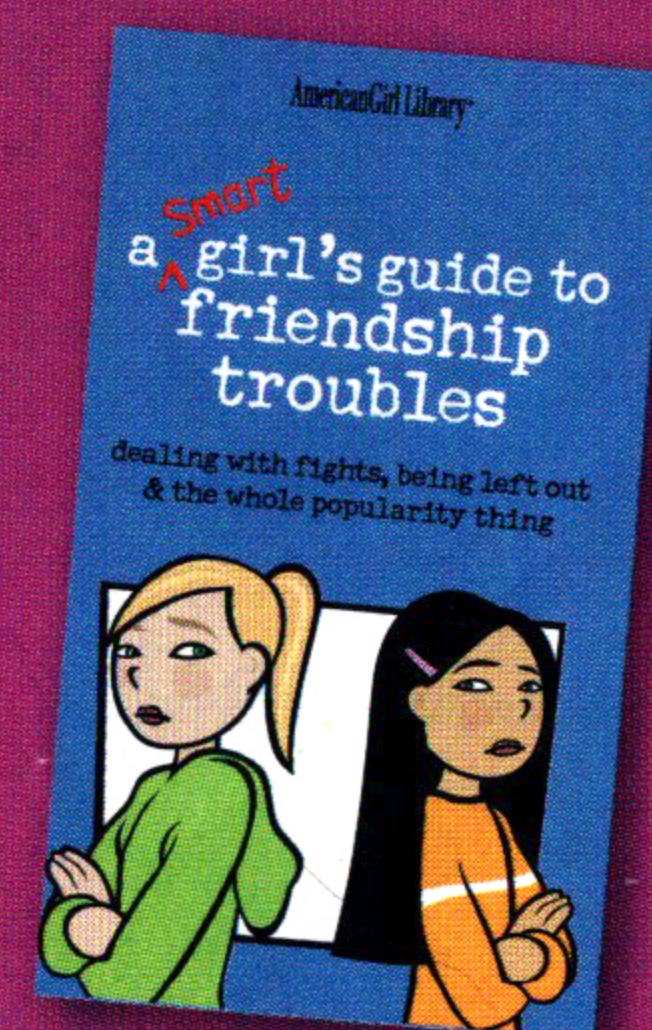


Your friends are lucky to have you as a friend. So never forget: **You have choices!** It's O.K. to let a friendship go if it's not right for you. Really. Not all friendships are going to last forever.

But how do you keep the true-blue friendships? By making sure that you keep communications open, admitting your mistakes, and most important of all, expressing your feelings.

As you grow and change, your relationships will, too. But a girl who knows her own heart and mind has all she needs to choose and enjoy good friends...**forever.** ★

For more advice on dealing with pal problems, check out *A Smart Girl's Guide to Friendship Troubles*, available at bookstores.



The Whole You

Brain Power

by Shannon Seip

Do you study, but nothing seems to sink in? Does your mind go blank when you take a quiz? Use these tips to learn how to improve your memory, help boost your grades, and keep from stressing out during test time!

Remember History

Don't try to study everything at one time. Instead, break the information into chunks and study one chunk at a time. To help break down the information, look for bold words or groups of words that are set apart in your textbook. These ideas are usually the most important.



To remember someone's claim to fame, think of an image based on the person's name. For example, Sally Ride was the first American woman to travel into space, so you could picture Sally "riding" on a spaceship.

Create in your mind a detailed story about the historical event. If you're studying how Harriet Tubman used the Underground Railroad to free slaves, imagine exactly how she secretly would prepare the escape plan. What would she need to pack? What would she say to calm down young children? The more detailed your story, the more you'll remember about the event.

After you finish reading a section, close the book and explain *out loud* to a friend, sibling, or parent what you just learned. After you finish the whole chapter, make up a practice test and quiz yourself.



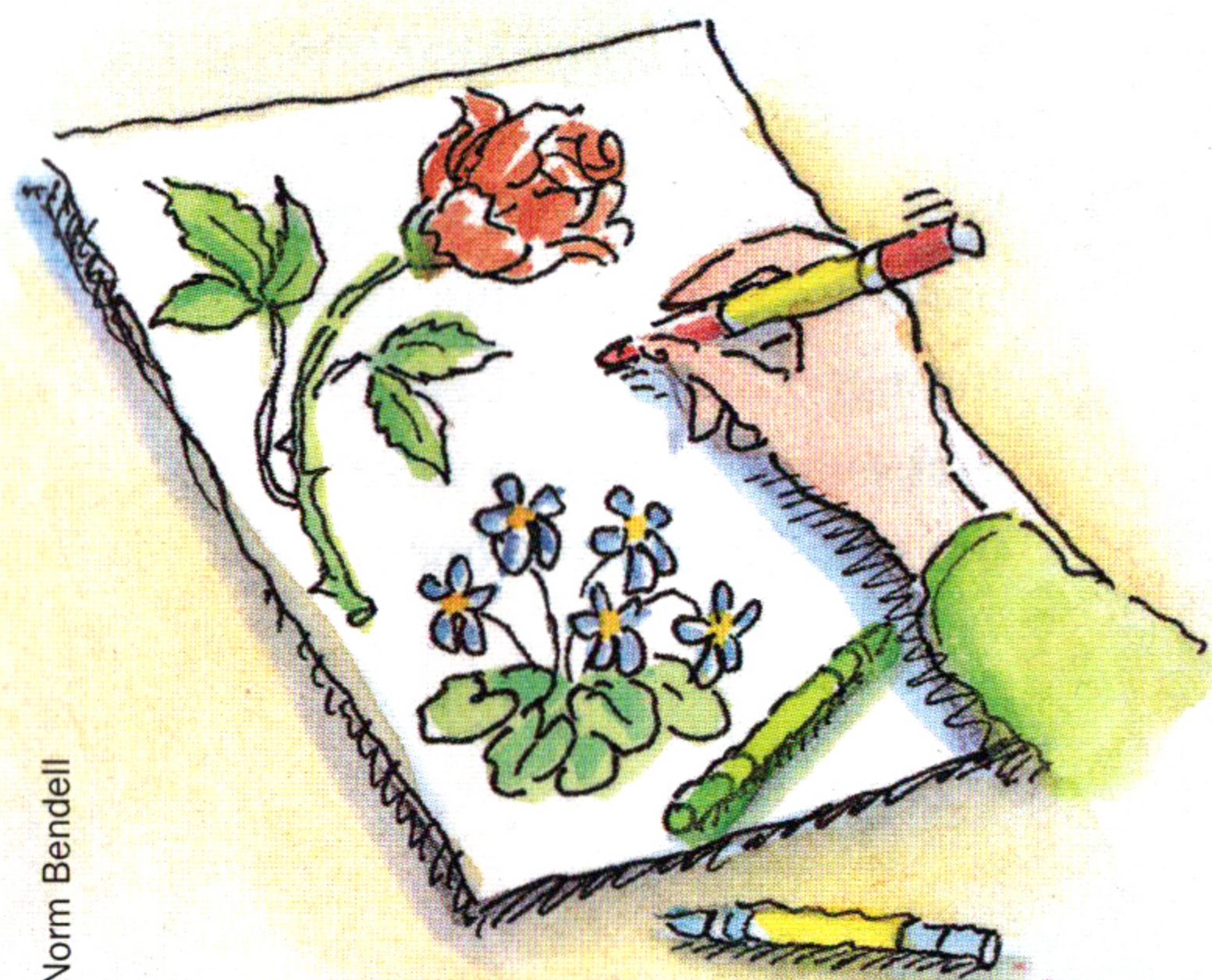
Remember Poems

Divide the poem into sections. Don't try to memorize the whole thing at one time. Work on learning a new line or stanza each day.

Say the poem *out loud* and listen and look for themes. Record your poem on tape and listen to it each night before bed.



Illustrate the poem. The pictures you draw will help the poem stay in your mind.



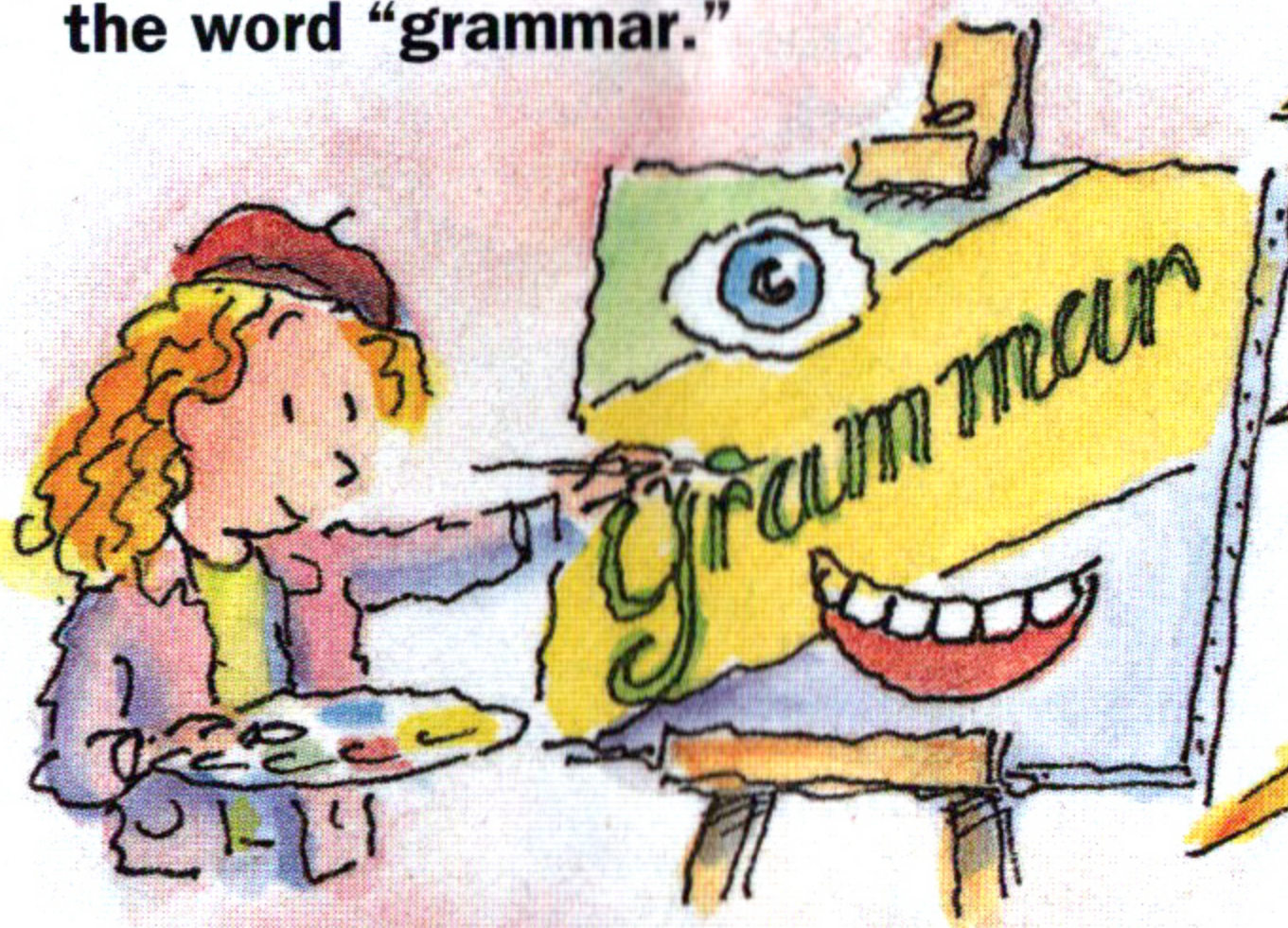
Illustrations: Norm Bendell

Remember Spelling

Create images to help you remember how to spell difficult words. Let's say you can never remember if the word "disappear" has one p or two. Your image could be a purple pear to help you remember it's two p's. Give your image an action related to the word's meaning to make it stick in your mind: a magician making a purple pear disappear from your lunch box.



Or it may be hard for you to remember if the word "grammar" ends in -ar or -er. Make up an image using another word with -ar in it: an *artist* painting the word "grammar."



Keep a list of the words that you often misspell. It'll help you figure out which words you need to create images for.

When you're studying your spelling list, *look at each word carefully*. Then *write it out* several times. Finally, *spell it out loud*. It's easier to remember each word if you can imagine yourself looking at it, writing it out, and hearing it.

Memory Boosters

Review. We forget most of what we read within five minutes. Quickly review the lesson once after you first read it, then one day later, and one week later.

Eat right. Your brain will be in better shape if you eat healthy foods. On test days, eat a balanced breakfast and skip the junk food at lunch.



Take breaks while studying. You'll be able to focus better after a short break.

Relax. Stress hurts your ability to remember. Take deep breaths and focus on the test, not your stress!

Get enough rest. Too little sleep makes your brain sluggish. ★



Back-to-School Sleepover

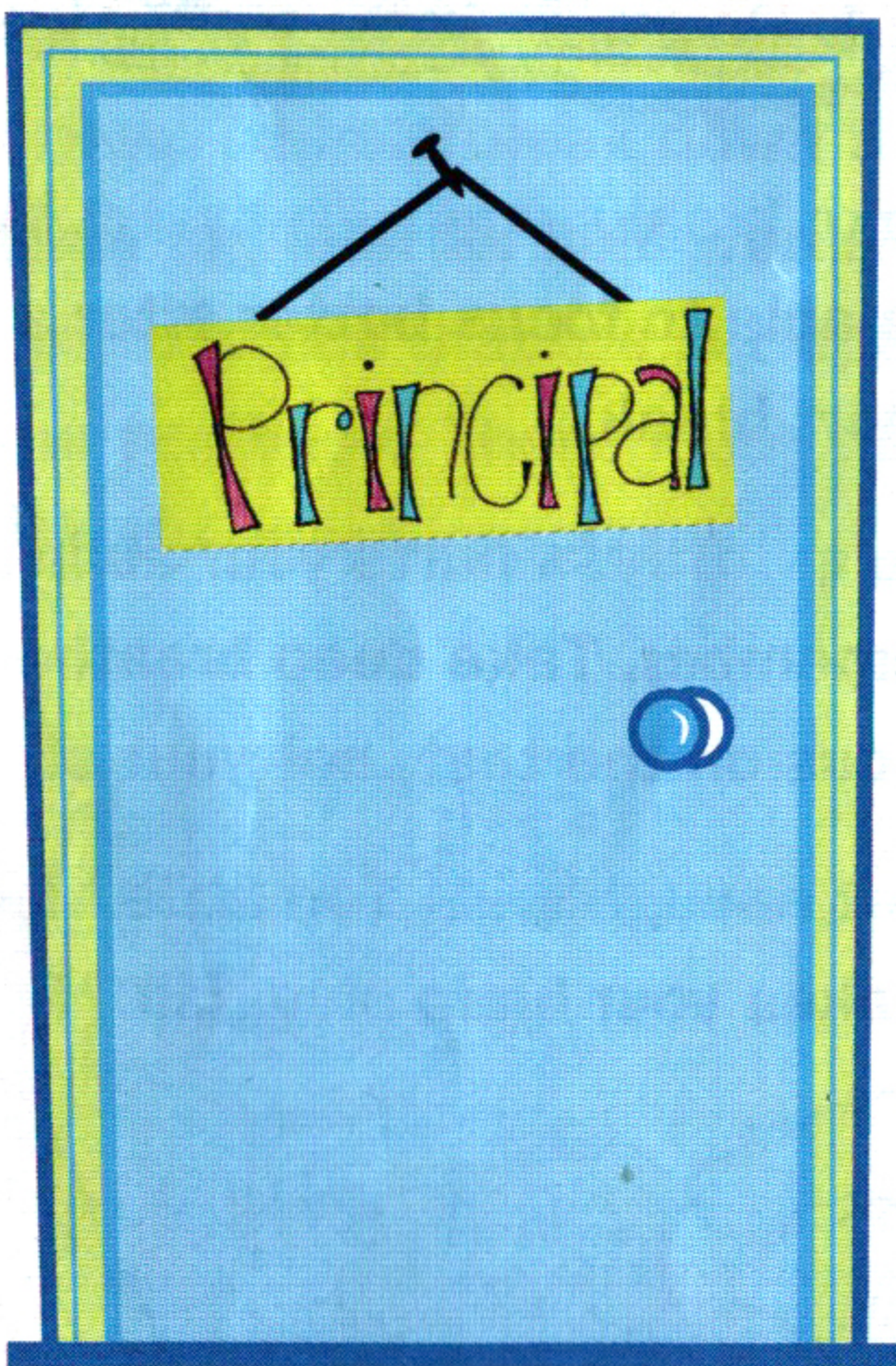


Throw a party in your PJ's to ring in the new school year!

Invitation

Pencil me in! Use a permanent marker to write party details on a pencil.

You are invited to a sleepover at Rachel's on Friday the 12th at 6:00



Sign Up

Transform your house into a school setting. Put signs such as Cafeteria on the kitchen door, Science on the basement door, or Principal on your parents' door.

Science

CAFETERIA



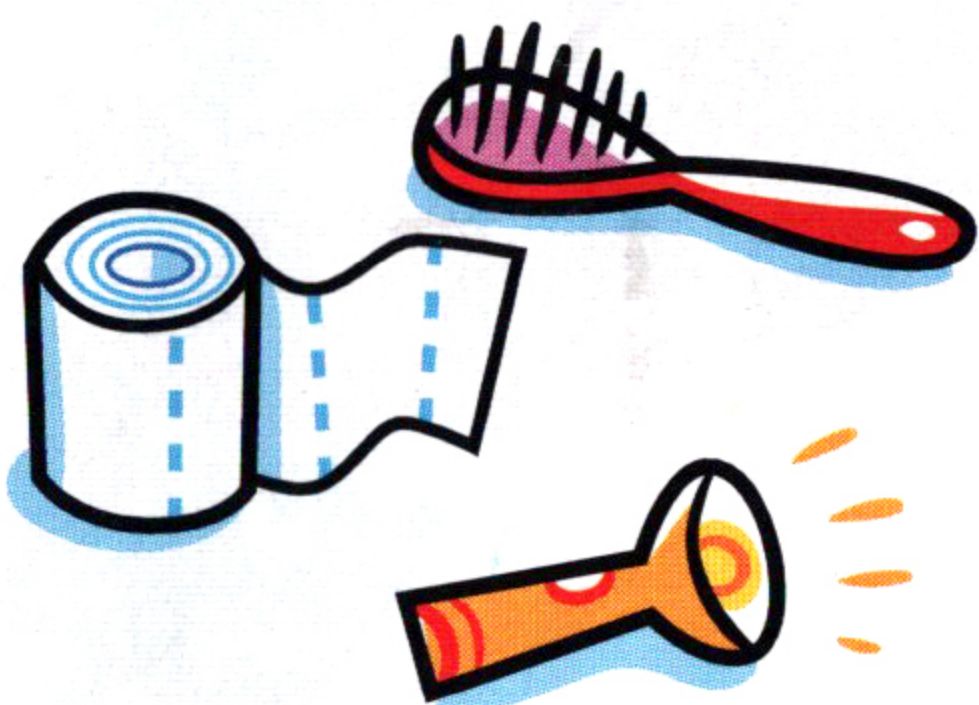
Mrs. Bluefido

Roll Call!

Figure out everyone's "teacher name." Your teacher name is your favorite color combined with a pet's name, such as "Mrs. Bluefido" or "Mrs. Yellowmitts." When someone yells, "Roll call!" everyone must shout out her own teacher name. Last one to say her name must wear kooky glasses (available at party stores). Play this game throughout the night so that everyone has to wear the glasses at least once!

Show and Tell

The more dramatic you are, the better you'll be at this silly game. Before guests arrive, put ordinary items (such as a tissue box, a spoon, or a toothbrush) into separate brown paper bags. The first player picks a bag. She opens it and talks about that item for one minute as if it is her most prized possession and no one else has ever seen it before. The first girl to laugh goes next.

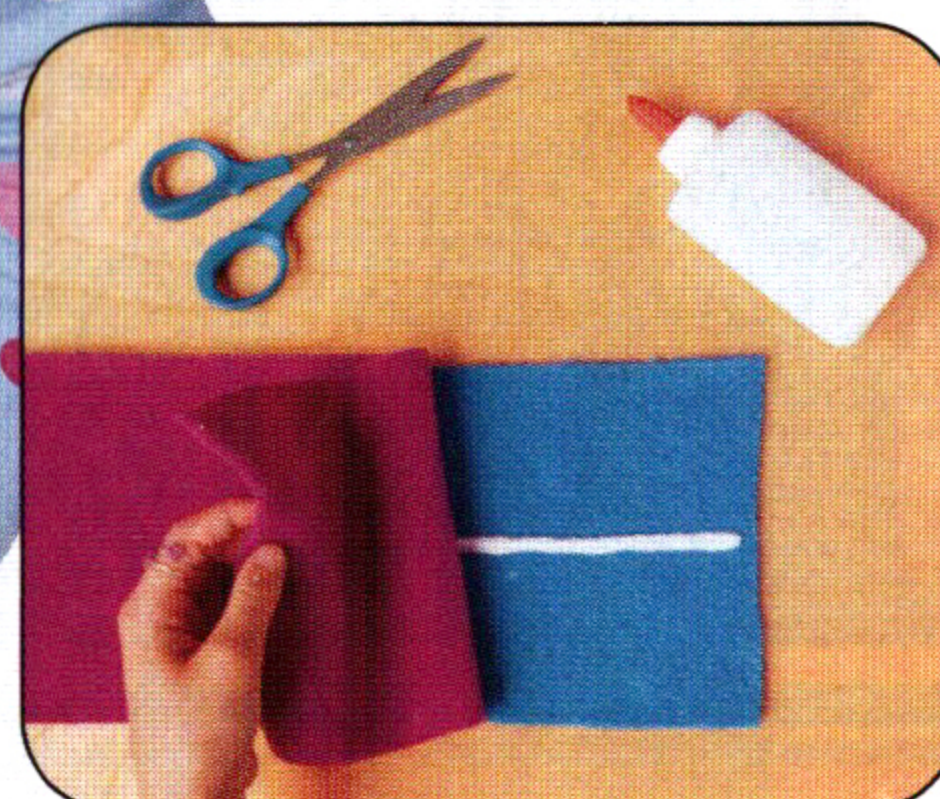


Spirit Scarf

Show your school pride by making a fleece boa in your school colors.


1 Cut 6-by-40-inch strips of fleece. Cut enough so each girl has 2 pieces, one of each color. Squeeze a line of fabric glue lengthwise down the center of one fabric piece. Place other piece on top. Let dry.

2 Cut 1-inch-wide strips along the length of the fabric, being careful not to cut through the center glue line. Repeat on other side. Fluff and wear!





Lots of Tots

 **Make Tater Tot fondue!**
Ask an adult to heat Tater Tots. Then choose some delicious dips, such as nacho cheese dip or spaghetti sauce. Give each girl a fork and dig in!

Rah!

Rah!



Singing Bee

Listening to music is the only studying required for this bee. Have guests stand in a line in alphabetical order by first name. Divide players into two teams down the middle. Team 1 plays the beginning of a popular song on a CD player and then stops it. Team 2 must sing the next line of the song. If team members sing it correctly, they get a point; if not, then no points are gained. Play goes back and forth between teams. The first team with 10 points wins.

RAH!

Three Cheers!

On slips of paper write down kooky animals such as groundhogs, alpacas, or ostriches. Place the slips of paper in a bowl. Line up from youngest to oldest and divide the group in half. A member from each team picks a slip of paper from the bowl. Each team has one minute to think of a clever cheer for their animal. After time is up, perform for the other group and get them excited. Go porcupines!



Pop Quiz

Who'll be best at this taste test? Buy five 12-ounce bottles of different kinds of brown soda such as Coke, Pepsi, root beer, etc. Cover the labels of the sodas and number them. Pass out pieces of paper with the numbers 1 through 5 written on them. Have

guests pour a tiny amount of soda into a cup and taste it. Then tell guests to guess what kind of soda it is and write it down. Peel off the numbers on the bottles to reveal the answers. The girl with the most right is the winner.



Teacher's Pet

Play this game all night long. Select a stuffed animal to be "teacher's pet." The object of the game is to sneak him into someone's sleeping bag when she isn't looking. See who is super sneaky and who is oh so obvious!

Cool Cafeteria

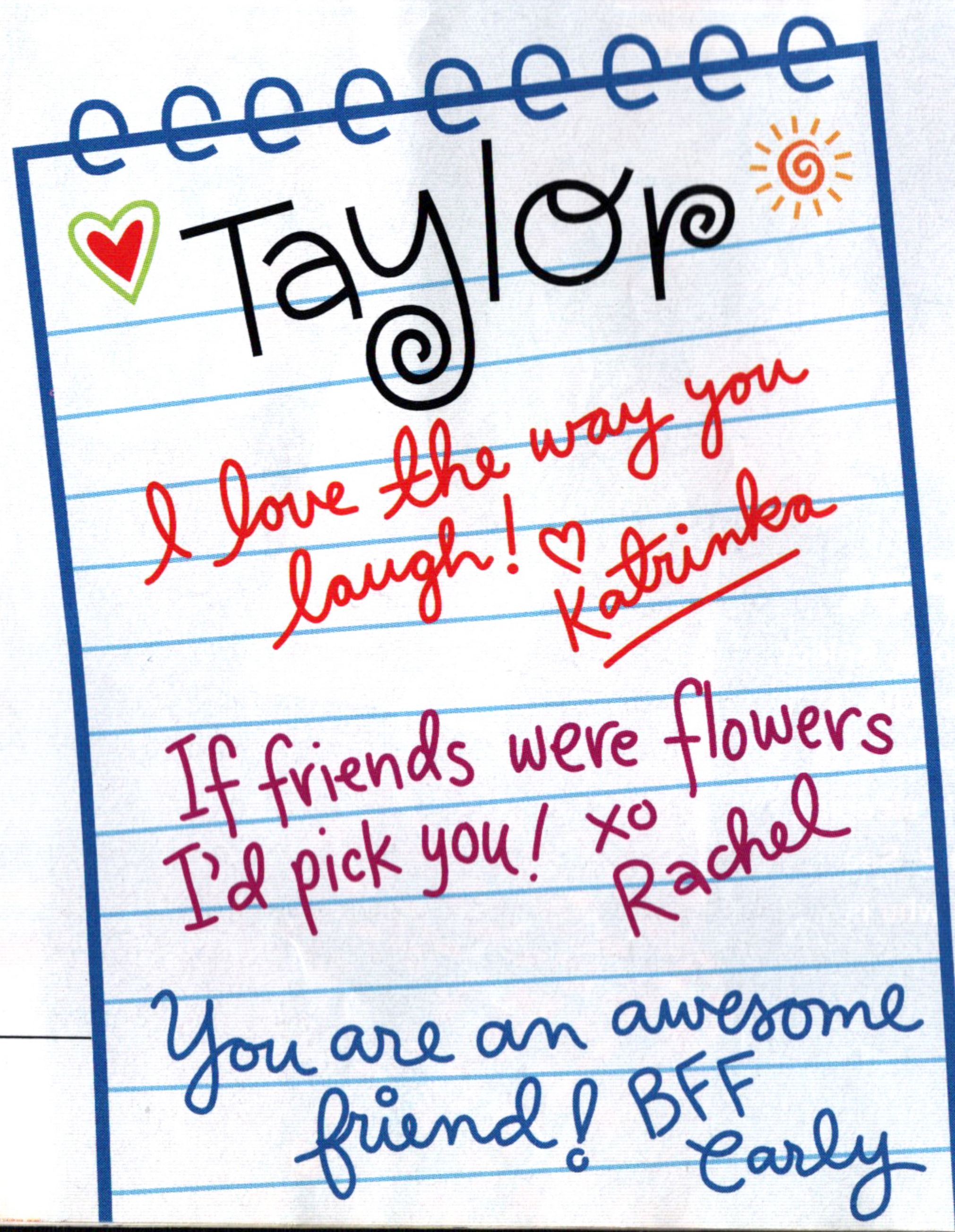
Capture the atmosphere of the school cafeteria in your home—serve snacks on plates with dividers. Next in line!





Substitute Teacher

Who's the one causing goofiness in the classroom? Choose one person to be the substitute teacher. The sub leaves the room. The remaining girls choose one person to be the leader. The leader starts doing an action and everyone follows. The leader continues to change what she's doing and everyone continues to follow her. The sub enters the room and tries to figure out who is leading the crazy students. Once she figures it out, the leader becomes the sub.



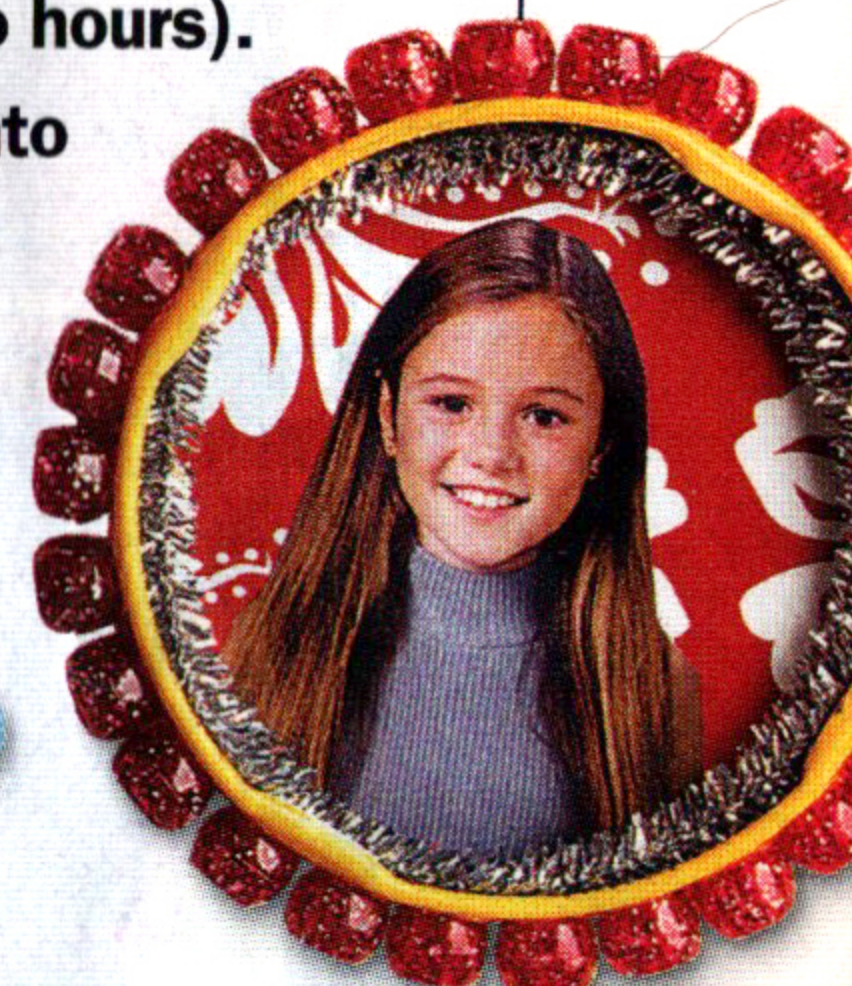
Glowing Reports

Give your friends positive comments about their friendship! Hand each girl a mini notebook with her name on it. Pass the notebook around in a circle, and have guests write nice comments about one another.



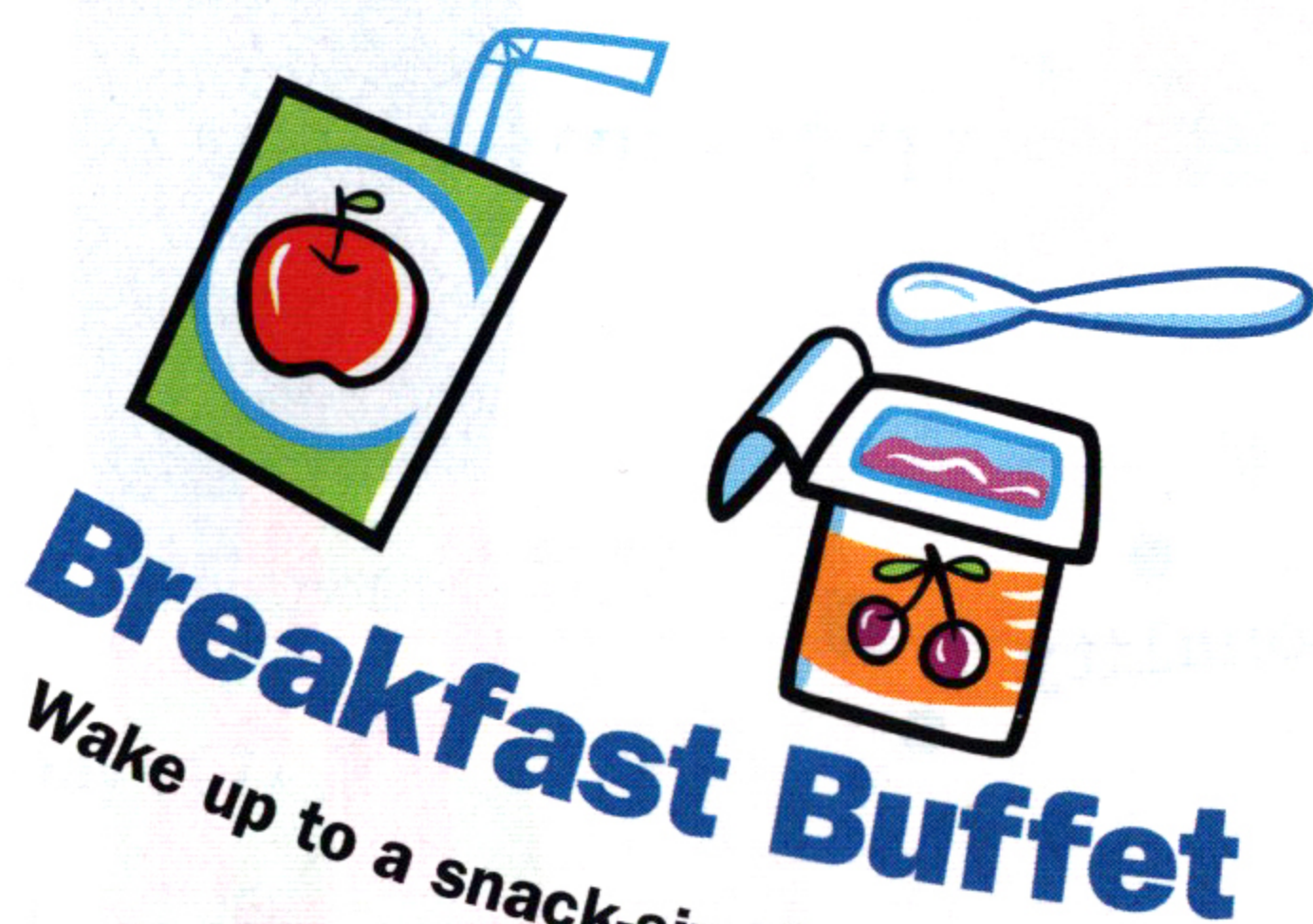
Cram!

See if you can stay calm under the pressure of this game. Put a bunch of school supplies on a tray and have everyone look at them for 30 seconds. Remove the tray, and ask guests to write down as many items as they can remember. Bring the tray back and list the items. The person who remembers the most gets to choose an item from the tray as a prize.



Stick Together

Think of your buds every time you open your locker. Have your parents save the lids from glass jars. Clean lids and give one to each guest. Have guests cut scrapbook paper to fit inside the lid. Glue the paper to the lid. Wrap a pipe cleaner around the inside edge of the lid. Use jewel glue to attach pony beads on the outside edge of the lid and let dry (about two hours). Glue a magnet onto the back and add a friend's photo!



Breakfast Buffet

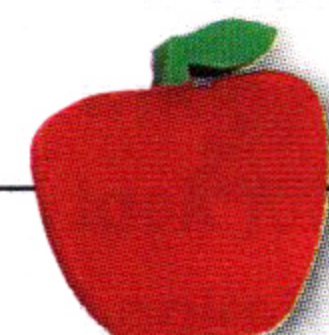
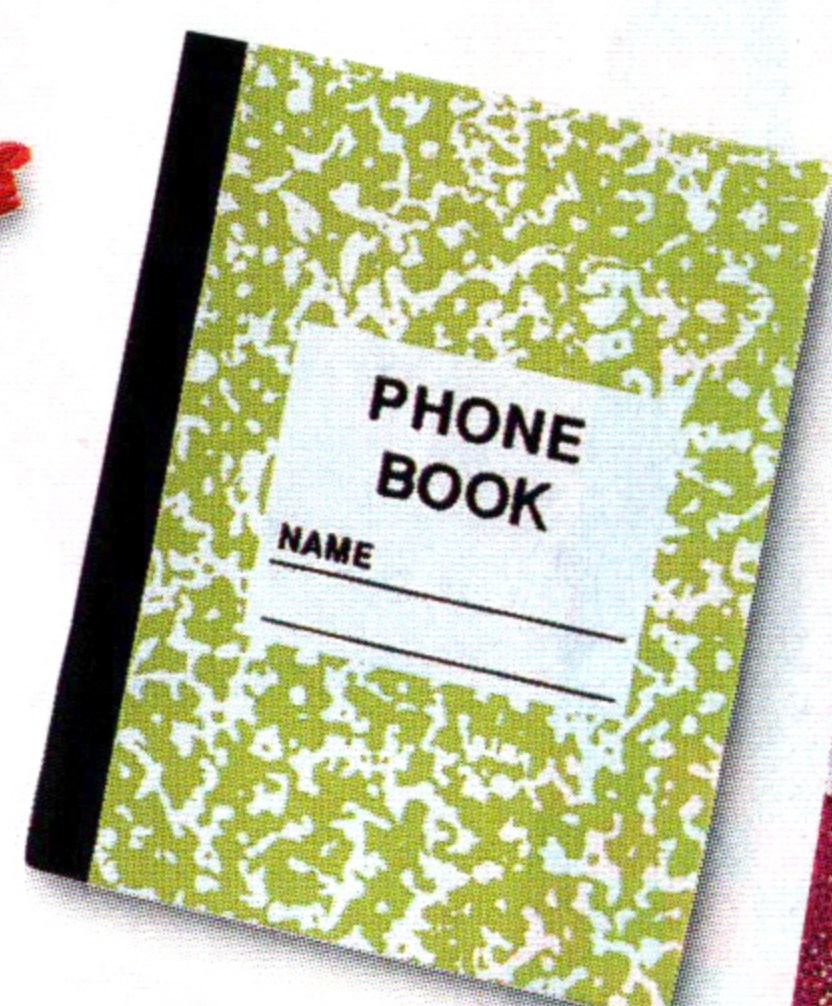
Wake up to a snack-sized smorgasbord. Offer guests a variety of mini boxes of cereal, mini yogurts, and boxed juices.

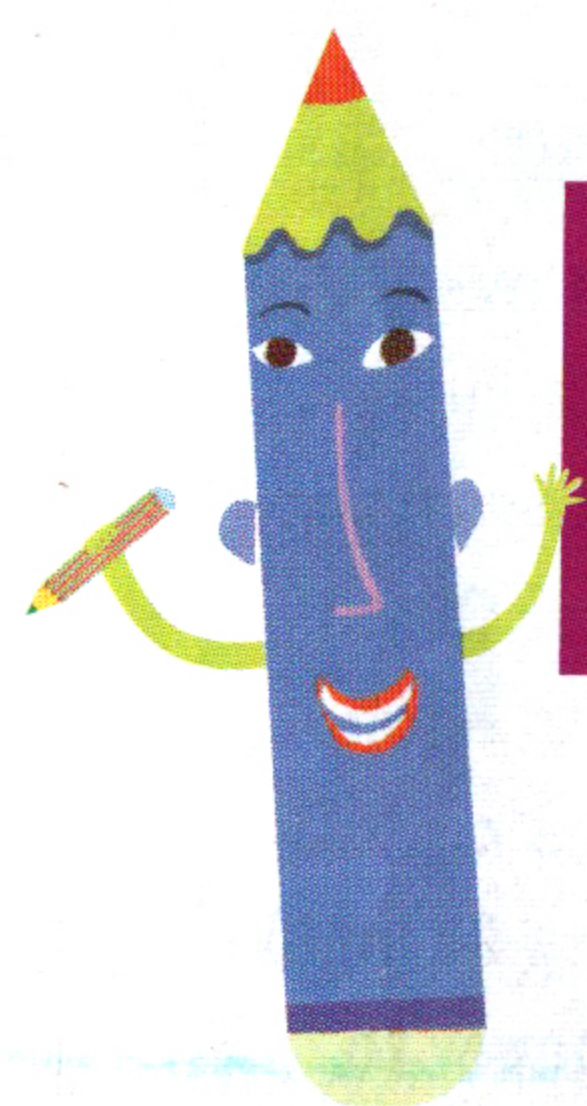


Munch Sacks

Turn ordinary lunch sacks into fun favors to give guests before they go home. Fill each bag with tiny treats, such as Smarties, cute erasers, pencils, and small notebooks. Fold the bag over twice and punch a hole

in each top corner. Secure the ends of a pipe cleaner through each hole to make a handle. Decorate the bags with AG's school stickers. It'll be the perfect memory of a fabulous party! ★





Pal Poems

by Kerry Madden



Want to let a friend know how you feel about her?
Write a personalized poem!

What's in a Name?

An *acrostic* poem uses the letters of a word to begin each line.
Use the letters in your friend's name to write a poem about her.

ANNABELLE

Able to rescue dogs, cats, and other small animals in a flash
Never fails to cheer me up when I'm feeling blue
Noble* and strong and faithful to all her friends
Anxious when she has to go to the dentist
Beautiful*—inside and out
Effervescent, which means she has a BUBBLY personality
Loves to read, and loves writing even more
Livid when her brother reads her diary
Excellent friend—I wouldn't trade her for the world!



Tips for Poets

Poetry *can* rhyme, but it doesn't have to. If rhyming is tough for you, try another style. If you get stuck writing your poem, don't rush it—come back to it later. Do some writing every day, because practice makes perfect, even for poetry!

Illustrations: Tracy McGuinness



Sweet as a Simile

A *simile* is a comparison of two things using "as" or "like." Write a poem about your friend using a simile.

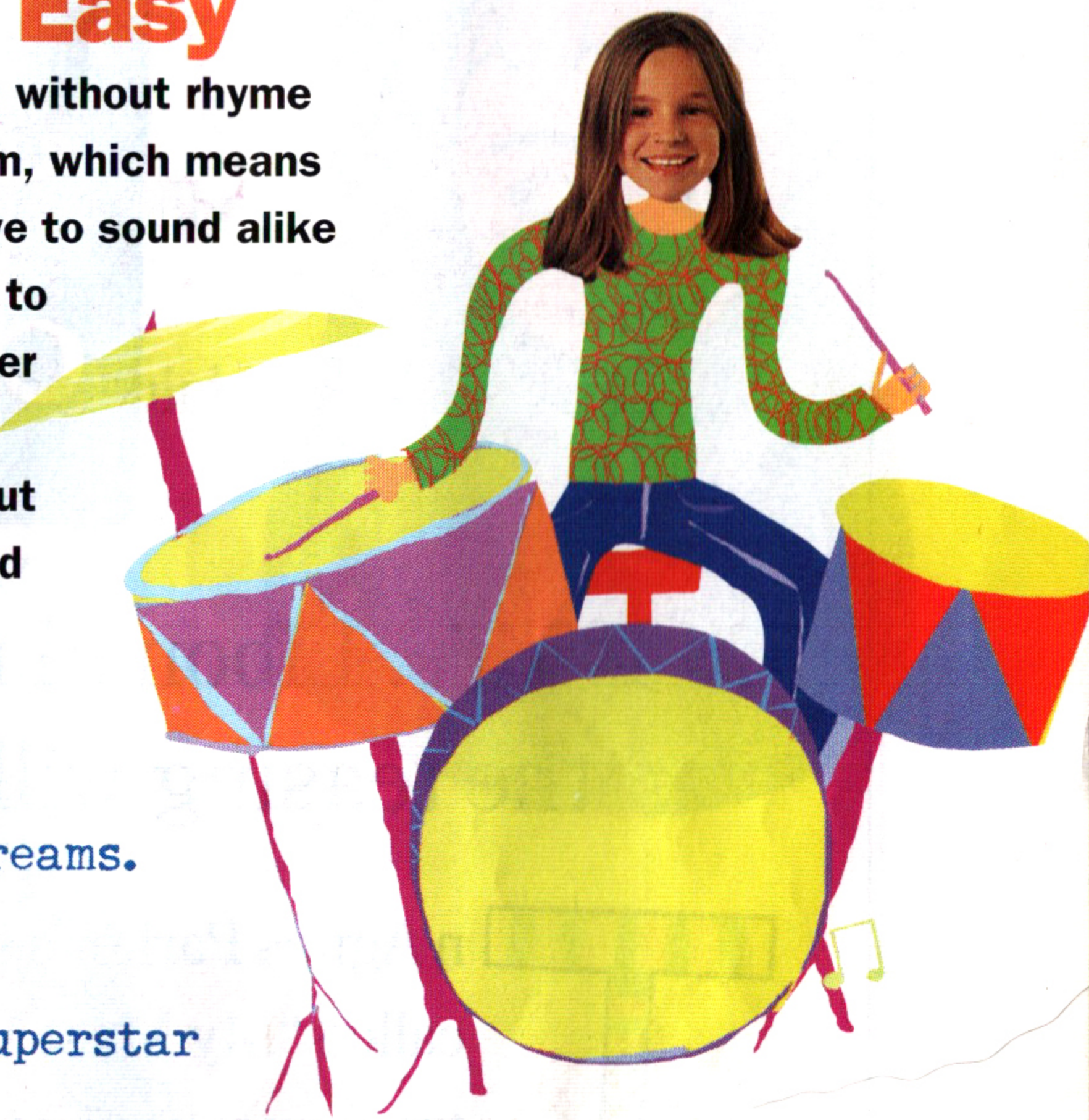
She is cheerful as a daisy
Friendly and bright
Her smile is like sunshine
Bursting with light



Free and Easy

Free verse is written without rhyme or a repeating rhythm, which means that words don't have to sound alike and lines don't have to have a certain number of syllables. Write a free verse poem about something your friend loves to do.

Alex drums
With rock band dreams.
Doesn't know
She's already a superstar
To me.



Take a Number

Create a poem based on your best friend's birth date! Use the numbers to determine how many syllables will go on each line.

December 17, 1991 = 12/17/91



Month (12)

1 Tess

2 Is great

Day (17)

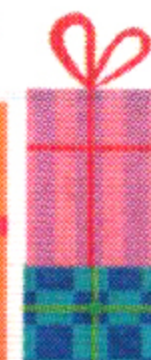
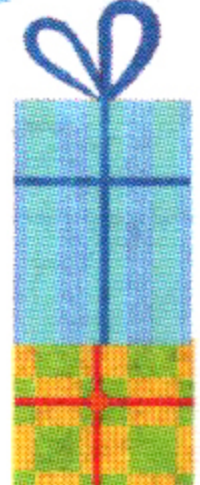
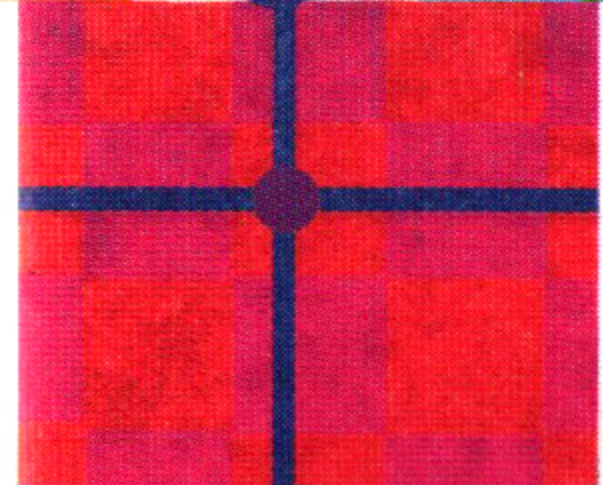
1 Tess

7 Makes me want to laugh out loud

Year (91)

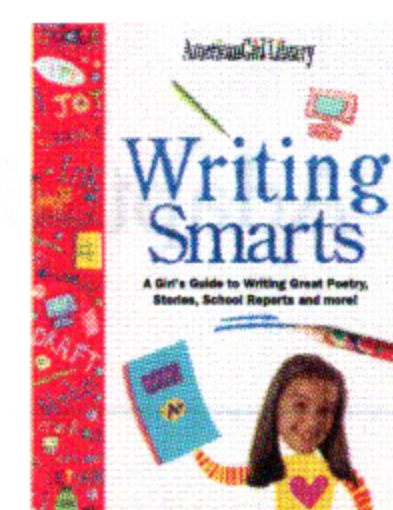
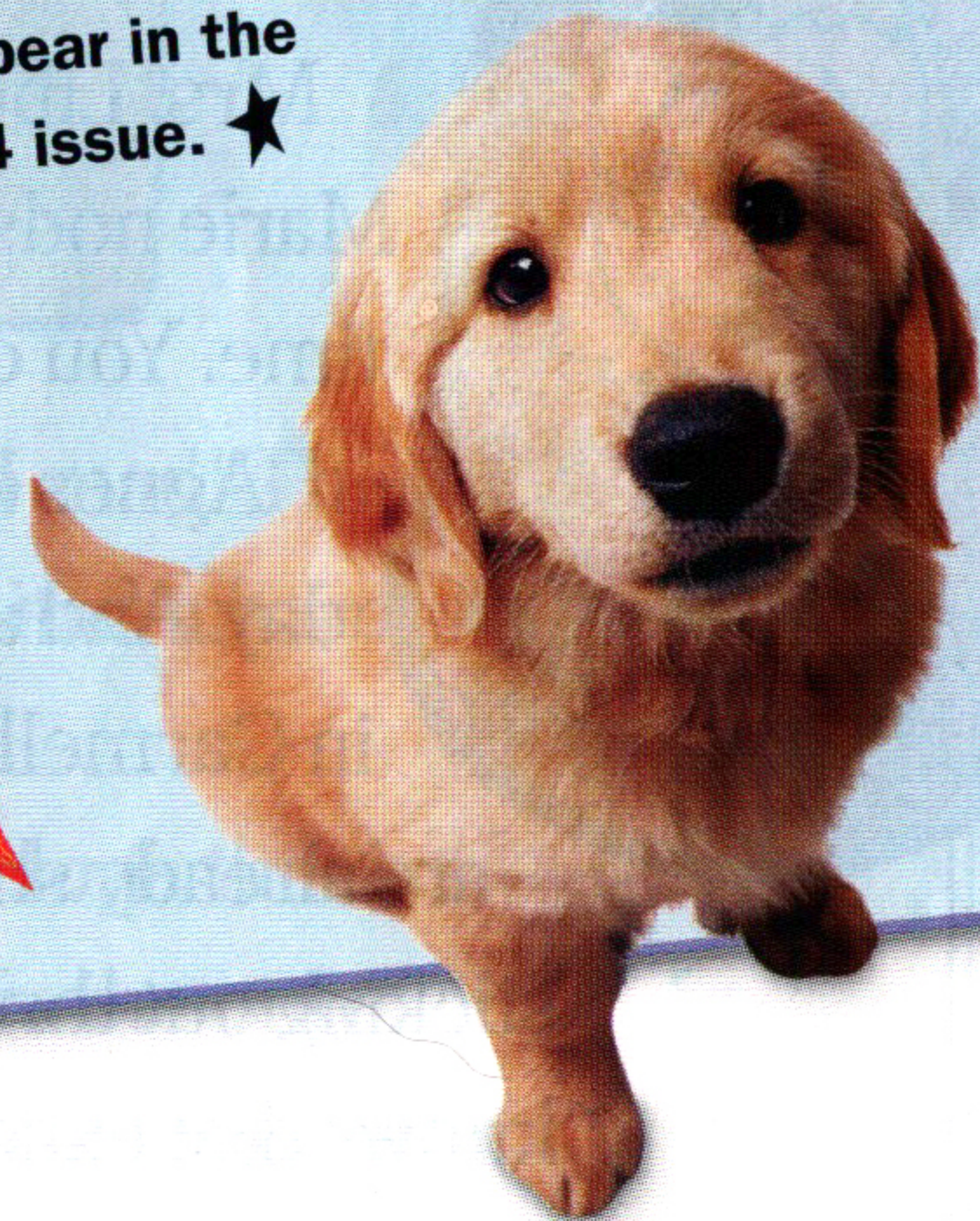
9 I'll never have a better friend than

1 Tess



you're invited

...to send us your pal poems!
You can write about your best bud, a furry friend, or friendship in general. Send your poem, along with your first and last name, address, birth date, and school photo to the address on page 2 by October 15, 2003. Winners will appear in the May/June 2004 issue. ★



For more clever ideas on writing poetry (and more!), look for *Writing Smarts*, in bookstores now.

The Secret Libbo Letter

by Kathleen O'Dell

If Mrs. Libonati makes Pat Marie read her essay to the class, the teasing will never stop. Agnes wants to help. But how?

In Agnes Parker's sixth-grade class, all the students are working on an essay called "My Most Memorable Moment." Agnes knows that the minute a teacher asks you to write about stuff like this, every memorable moment disappears. So you invent something very, very lame.

Mrs. Libonati is collecting the essays when something stops her square in front of Pat Marie Hinkle's desk. Actually, she is mostly called Fat Marie, a nickname stuck to her years ago. Pat Marie is alone a lot. She used to have a quiet, skinny, almost ghostly-looking friend named Lee Ann Greenglass, who moved last spring. So far, Pat Marie has not found a replacement for her.

"Pat Marie, this essay is only one sentence long," says Mrs. Libonati.

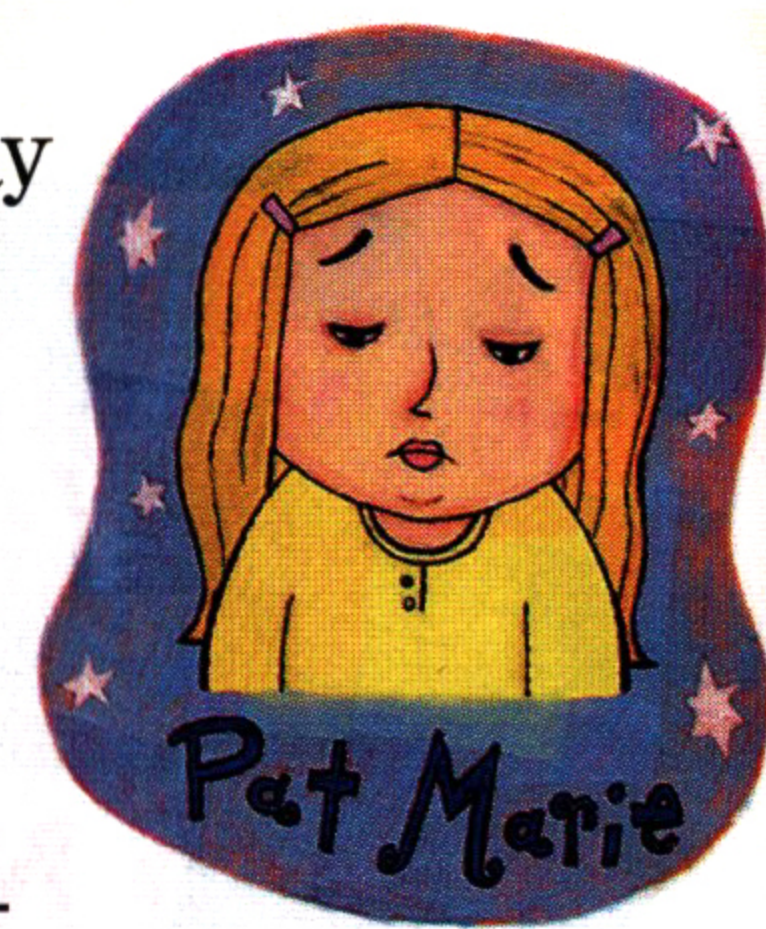
"Mm-hmm," says Pat Marie, focusing her eyes on the top of her desk.

"My Most Memorable Moment," reads Mrs. Libonati. "The time they let me back into McDonald's." Mrs. Libonati drops her hands to her sides. "The end'?"

Pat Marie does not reply.

Mrs. Libonati asks, "I think you need to add some more detail, don't you?" Pat Marie nods silently. "Bring this back to me tomorrow. And tell the whole story this time. You can read it to us in the morning."

Agnes knows this means that Pat Marie is going to have a terrible day. And a terrible tomorrow. She sees Neidermeyer whispering in Carmella's ear. Then Carmella signals to Brian, whose shoulders are already shaking with his nasty chuckling. Pat Marie's ears are sticking out through her straight hair and they are fiery red. Agnes knows that exact feeling.



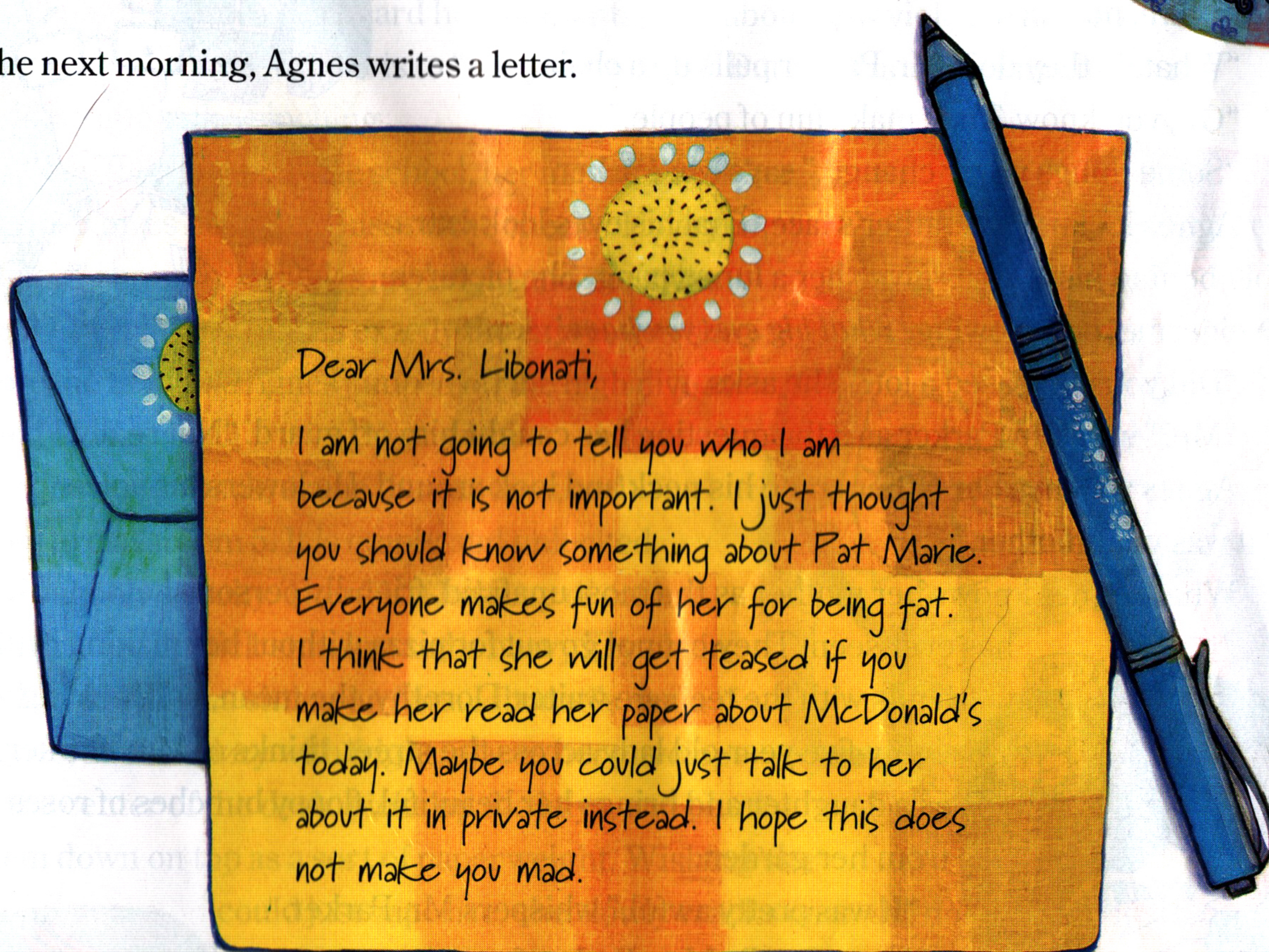
Adapted from the book *Agnes Parker...Girl in Progress*

At least Agnes always has her friend Prejean. But who does Pat Marie have? Just Neidermeyer and Carmella and loud-mouthed boys like Brian Olansky on her case. Agnes knows that without Prejean, she really is just inches from being another Pat Marie. *Ugh.*

Agnes wants to stand between Pat Marie and Neidermeyer like a shield. It is not easy to picture.

But as Neidermeyer smirks, Agnes folds her arms and comes to a quiet decision. *We'll see, Neidermeyer*, she says to herself. *We'll see...*

The next morning, Agnes writes a letter.



Agnes erases that last line. *Of course* this letter is going to make Libbo mad! This is what makes it so nerve-racking to write and even scarier to deliver. She had a hard time getting to sleep last night just thinking about it.

She signs the letter from "a student," folds it, and sticks it into an envelope that is decorated with daisies. The daisies don't look forceful enough, but this is the only stationery she owns. She writes "Mrs. Libonati" on the front and sticks the letter into her backpack.

In the kitchen Mr. Parker is at his customary place by the window, sipping coffee and staring. Agnes has no idea what it is he dreams about there every morning. He asks her, "How's school?" but doesn't turn his head. "Fine," says Agnes. And then she adds, "Except for the usual jerks."

"You mean bullies?" he asks.

Agnes is a little shocked to have her father's full attention. "Just some mean kids at school," she says.

"Are they hitting people?" asks Mr. Parker.

"Umm, no."

"What do they do?" Mr. Parker pulls up a chair.

"Oh, you know. They make fun of people."

"Some things never change," says Mr. Parker.

Agnes looks at her father's face. That his eyes look extra big behind his glasses gives her a funny pang. She pictures Neidermeyer bellowing, *What big eyes you have!*

"Did you get teased a lot?" she asks.

"Me?" says Mr. Parker as if the question has caught him off guard. "Not really."

Agnes watches her father crane his neck and look around. He lowers his voice.

"It was your mother."

What? Agnes knows her mother as the most unafraid, friendly person she has ever seen. They cannot go out for pizza without her making friends with the teenage waiter. Dorothy, the mean, ball-stealing eighty-five-year-old lady across the street, thinks of Mrs. Parker as a daughter and brings her beautiful, floppy bunches of roses from her garden.

"It was pretty awful," whispers Mr. Parker.

"Agnes!" calls Mrs. Parker from the entryway. "If you want a ride, you'd better be ready now!"

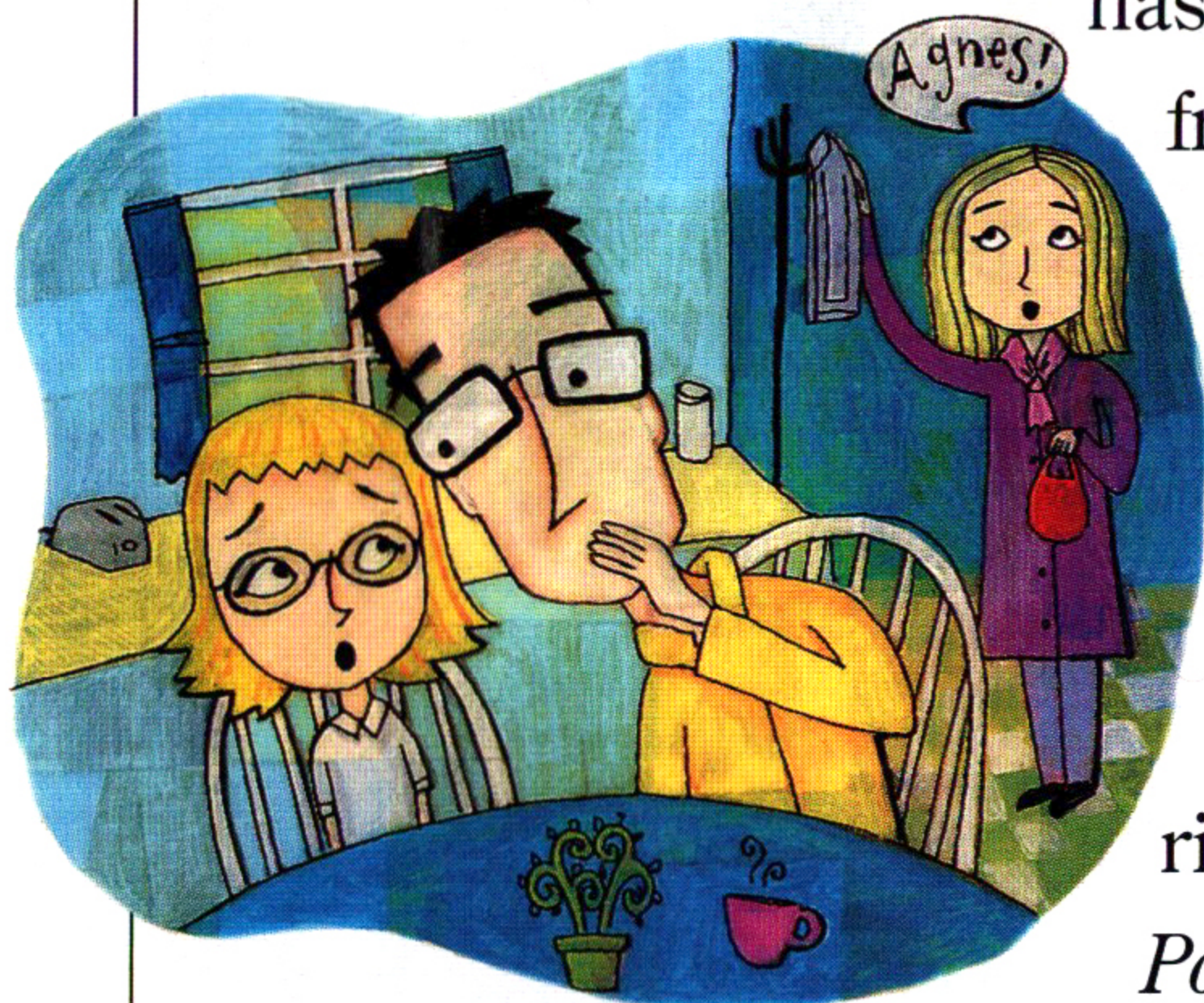
Poor Mom, thinks Agnes.

"Agnes!" Mrs. Parker yells again.

Agnes is careful not to ask her mother anything specific during the ride to school. "Mom?" she asks, glancing over. "What do you think about people who make fun of people?"

"Is someone making fun of you?" Mrs. Parker quickly asks.

"No. I'm just talking about kids who make fun of other kids. Just generally."



Mrs. Parker stops at a light. She turns to Agnes and looks her straight in the eyes. "If someone makes fun of you, I am giving you permission to pinch them. You can pinch them as hard as you want. Do you understand?"

"Oh, Mom, no one's making fun of me," says Agnes. "Really."

"*Pinch* them," says Mrs. Parker emphatically.

"Okay," says Agnes.

"And if that gets you in trouble, have them call me from the office." After a few moments of silence she mutters, "So help me God..."

All her life Agnes has heard her mother talking about how violence never solves anything, how important it is to "use your words." But she knows her mother is not kidding about the pinching.

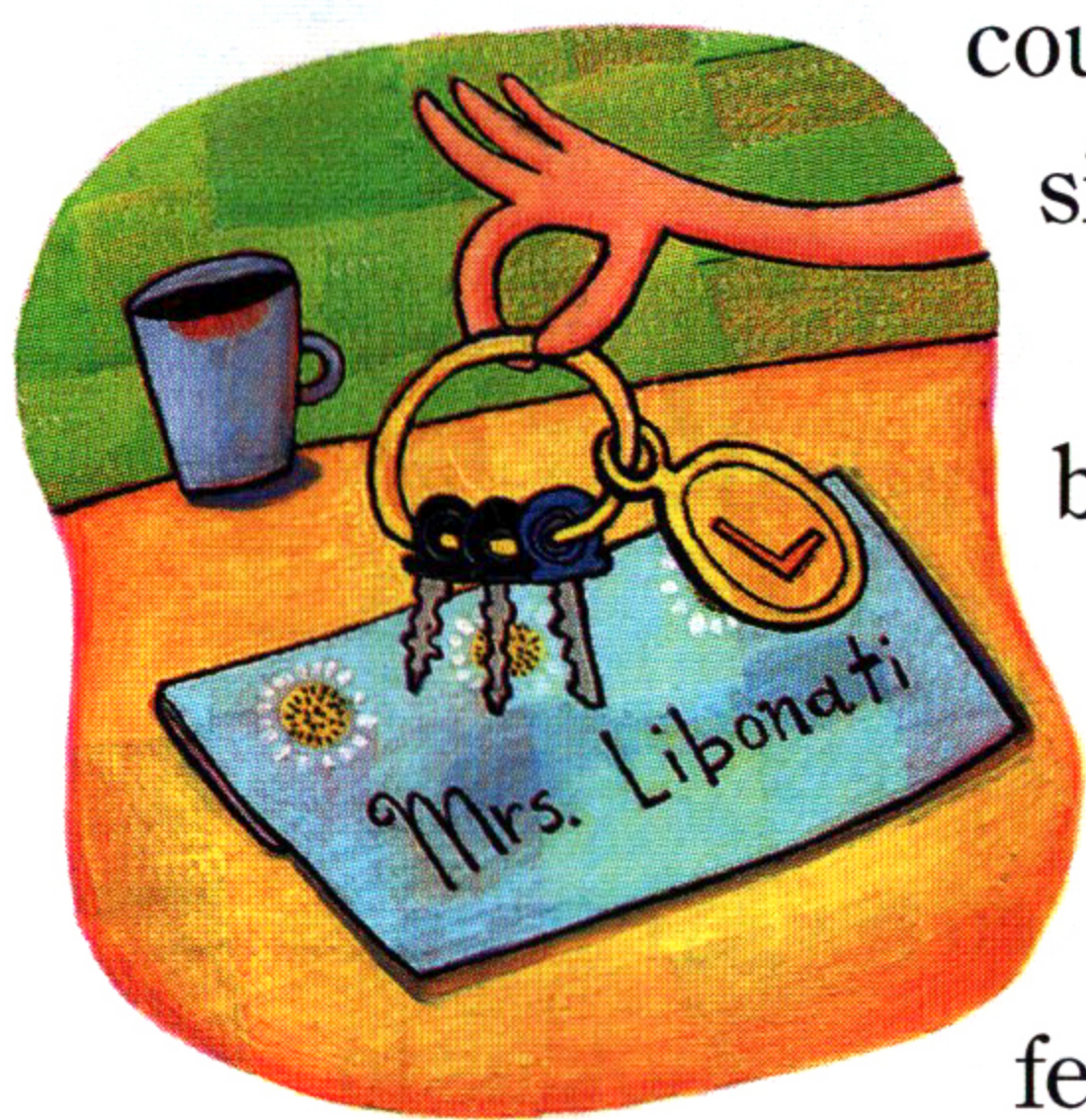
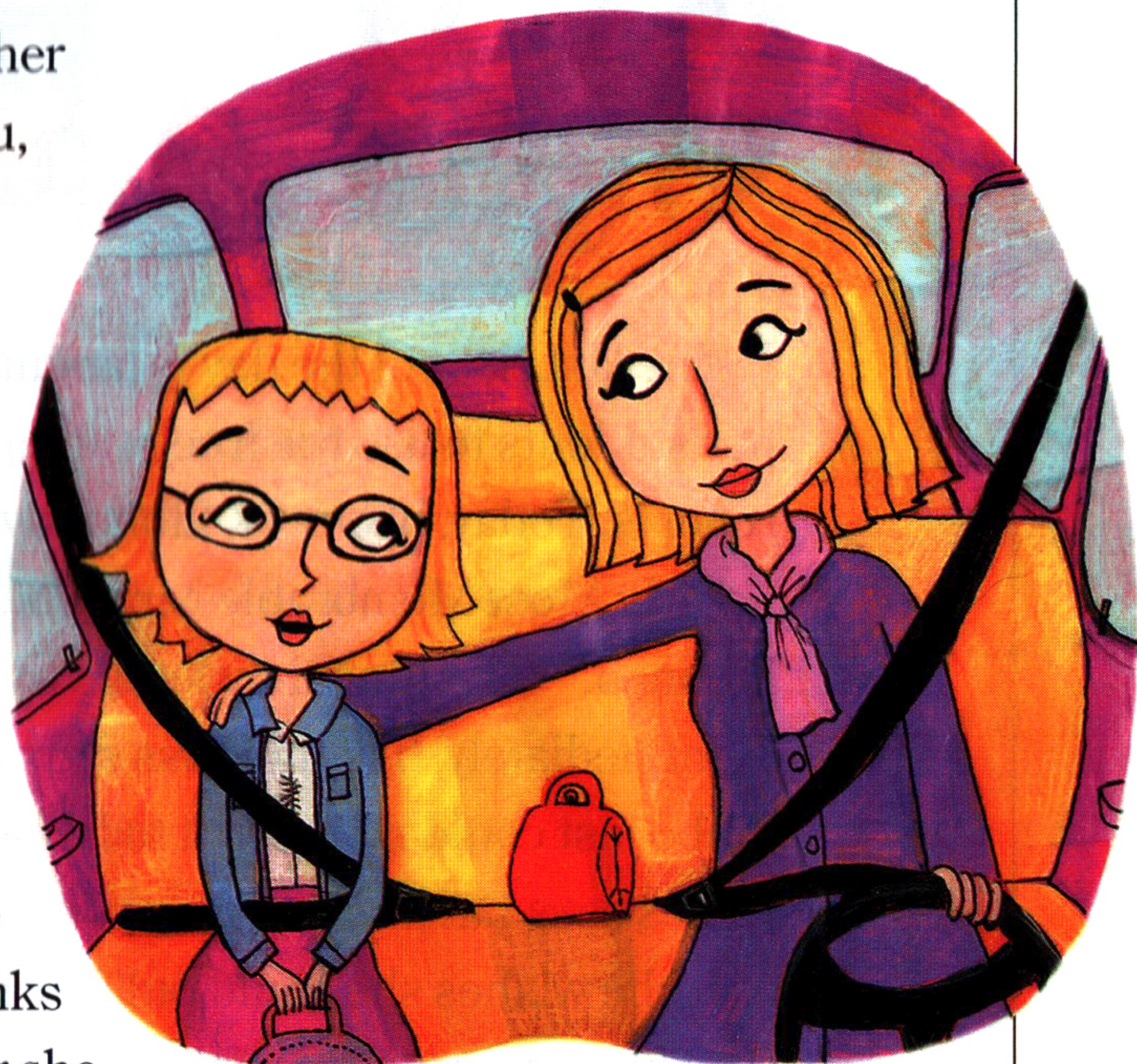
When they pull up at the school, her mother grabs her face and gives her a hard kiss on the cheek. "I love you, Agnes," she says. Her eyes are bright and she gives her head a sharp nod. It is exactly the expression she wore the first time Agnes jumped off the high dive at Sandy Lake.

Agnes nods back, slams the car door, and runs to classroom 5. It is empty and unlocked and vaguely spooky. There is a half cup of coffee with a huge lipstick smudge and a heavy key chain with gold bangles sitting on Mrs. Libonati's desk. Agnes, almost dizzy with fright, places her envelope in the center of the desk, picks up the keys, and plunks them down on top as a sort of paperweight. Wishing she

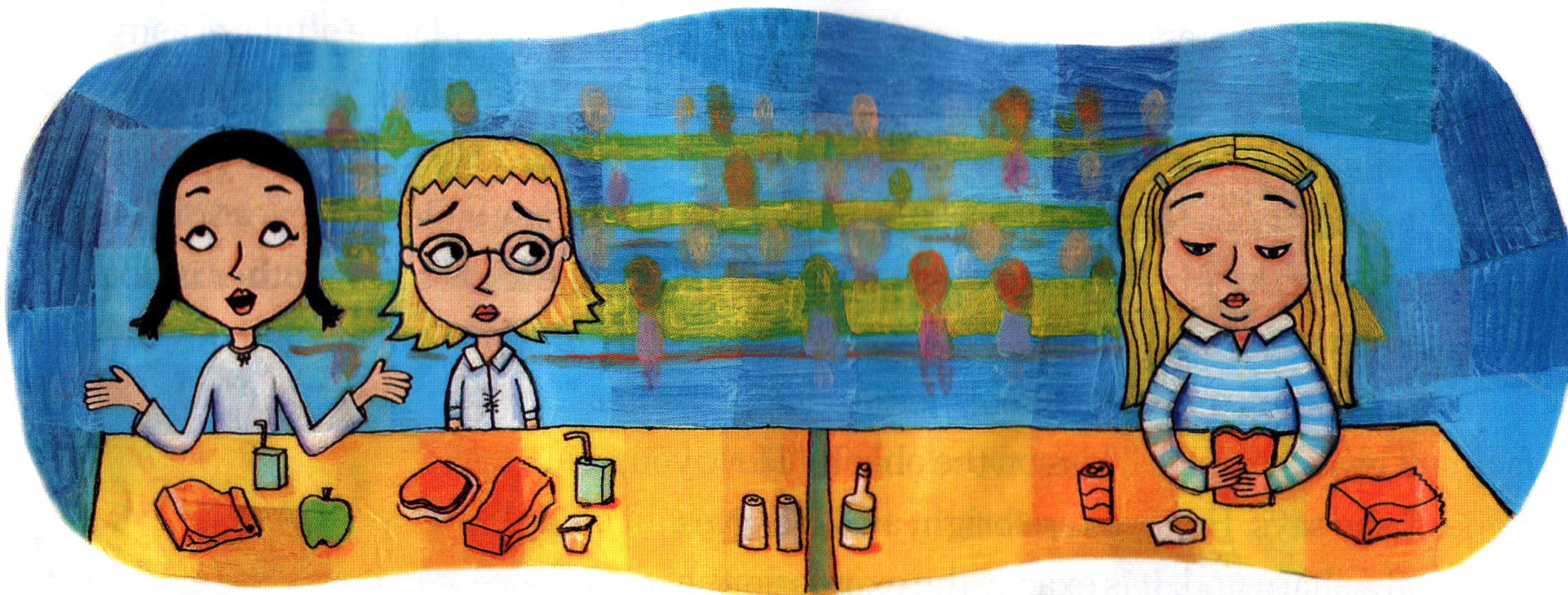
could just vaporize, she slowly cracks open the door, slips out sideways—and is free!

Prejean is sitting on a bench around the corner. "Where have you been?" she asks.

"My mom took me this morning," says Agnes, still feeling flushed and light-headed. She has never kept a secret from her best friend. But at the same time, somewhere in her heart, Agnes feels that telling anyone about the note would change her reason for leaving it. That would turn it into a show-offy thing. And that would leave her feeling a little not-right and kind of ashamed.



In class Mrs. Libonati gives no clue of having read the letter, even though it is now missing from her desk. And as the day moves into noon, she still doesn't ask Pat Marie to read her essay. At lunch Agnes eyes Pat Marie alone at the end of the cafeteria table. She thinks of herself as Pat Marie's secret friend. Should she sit down by her, ask her how she's doing?



The last class of the day is language arts. Lately, Mrs. Libonati has been allowing her students to use the free reading time in order to prepare for their American Indian reports. Today, however, Libbo says she has something to read aloud, herself.

"'My Most Memorable Moment,' by Pat Marie Hinkle," reads Mrs. Libonati. "'The time they let me back into McDonald's.'"

Immediately, half the class starts tittering. Agnes feels hot. So, Libbo just could not keep it to herself. *That Libbo! Such a hard case!* Agnes sees Pat Marie sitting with her neck buried in her shoulders, as if she wishes she could pull her head in like a turtle.

"This moment is special to me," reads Mrs. Libonati, "because it was the night before my best friend moved to Chicago. Her name is



Lee Ann. She was scared to move because she lived here her whole life. And the day before she moved, she lost her ballerina charm. This made her even more afraid because it was something from her grandma who died. So everything felt like bad luck.

"Lee Ann was crying. We looked everywhere for her charm and it was terrible.

I went to bed that night and kept on thinking about it. Then I closed my eyes and saw McDonald's. My mom stopped there for coffee that morning when she took us to school. I ran downstairs and told my mom and dad I had to go back because I just knew the charm was there. They let me put my coat over my pajamas and took me there. At



first I thought it was in the bathroom, but I couldn't find it. Then I found out someone had picked it up in the bathroom and gave it to the people at the cash register. I got the charm. And I gave it back to Lee Ann at the airport. The end." Mrs. Libonati looks up from the paper. Agnes has noticed that Libbo has a certain crocodile smile she uses when she is about to come down hard on a kid. It is a thin-lipped smile that shows way too many teeth. But this particular smile doesn't have even a hint of crocodile in it. "Compare this to yesterday's paper. This essay tells us so many things," says Mrs. Libonati. She walks to the board and picks up her black enameled chalk holder. She writes in bold letters: Pat Marie. "Because Pat Marie told us her story in detail, we learned some important things about her. Who can name something he or she learned?"

The class seems momentarily shy. Agnes wants to but is too frozen to raise her hand. "I learned Pat Marie is loyal," Natalie finally says.

Loyal, writes Mrs. Libonati. "Anyone else?"

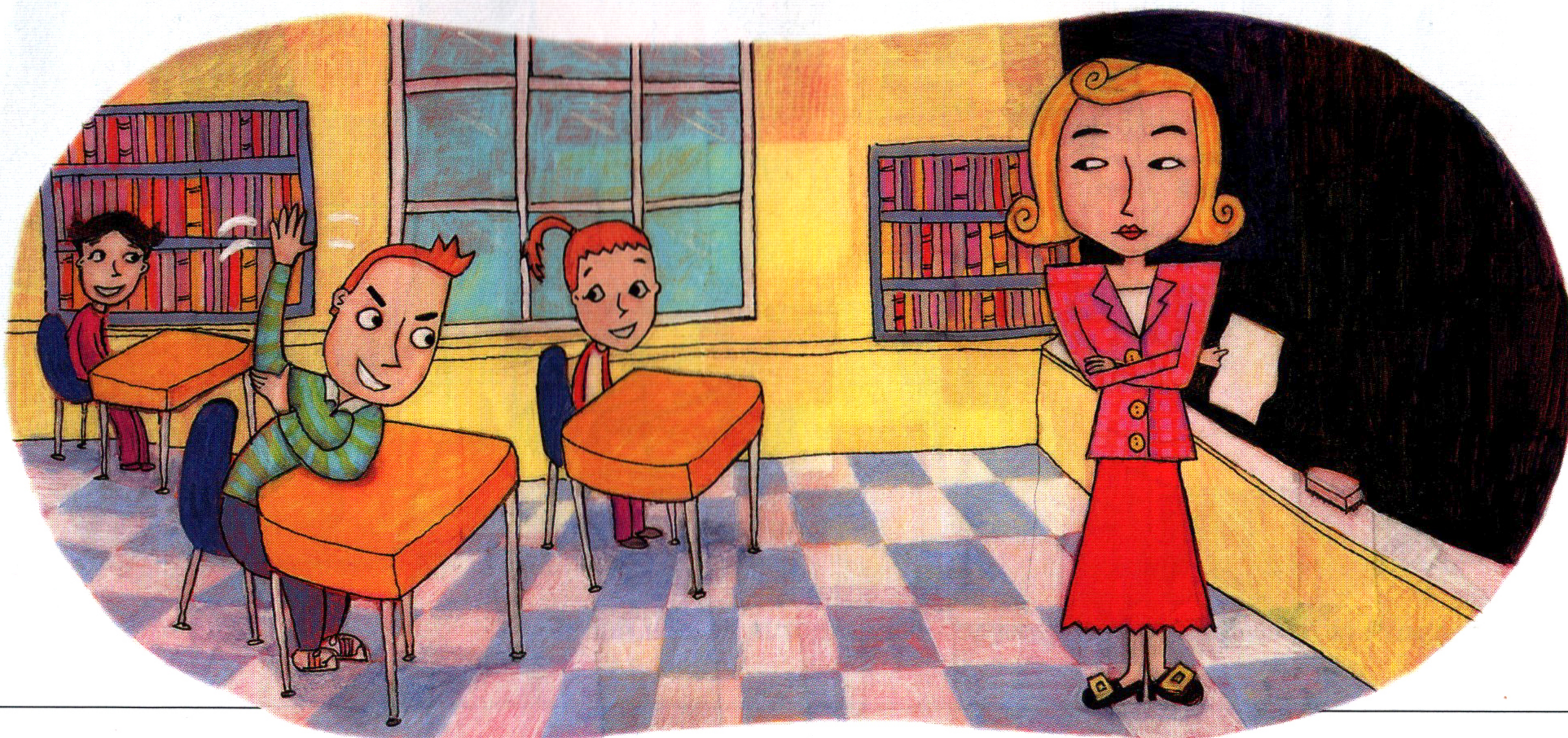
Ashley raises a hand. "Um, I learned that she has, like, a good memory?"

Good memory, writes Mrs. Libonati, nodding her head in agreement.

Brian waves his hand in a funny way. He bends his elbow and holds his arm scrunched up next to his body and sort of twinkles his fingers.

"Brian?" says Mrs. Libonati.

Brian looks quickly over at Neidermeyer, then assumes a deadpan gaze — something he always does when he thinks he is about to be hilarious. "I learned that Pat Marie loves to eat at McDonald's," he says.



Mrs. Libonati wears an expression every bit as blank as Brian's. She stands completely still and holds his gaze.

"And how did you learn that?" asks Mrs. Libonati at last.

"She says so," says Brian.

"Where?" asks Mrs. Libonati.

"On that paper..." Brian's voice is quieter now.

"Hmm. Let's see." Mrs. Libonati picks up Pat Marie's "Most Memorable Moment" and squints. She even turns the page over to the blank side and looks there. "No, Brian," says Mrs. Libonati. "All I see here is that Pat Marie's mother likes to stop there for coffee."

Brian says, "Oh."

"I don't think you were paying attention," says Mrs. L. "Were you, Brian?"

Brian is silent.

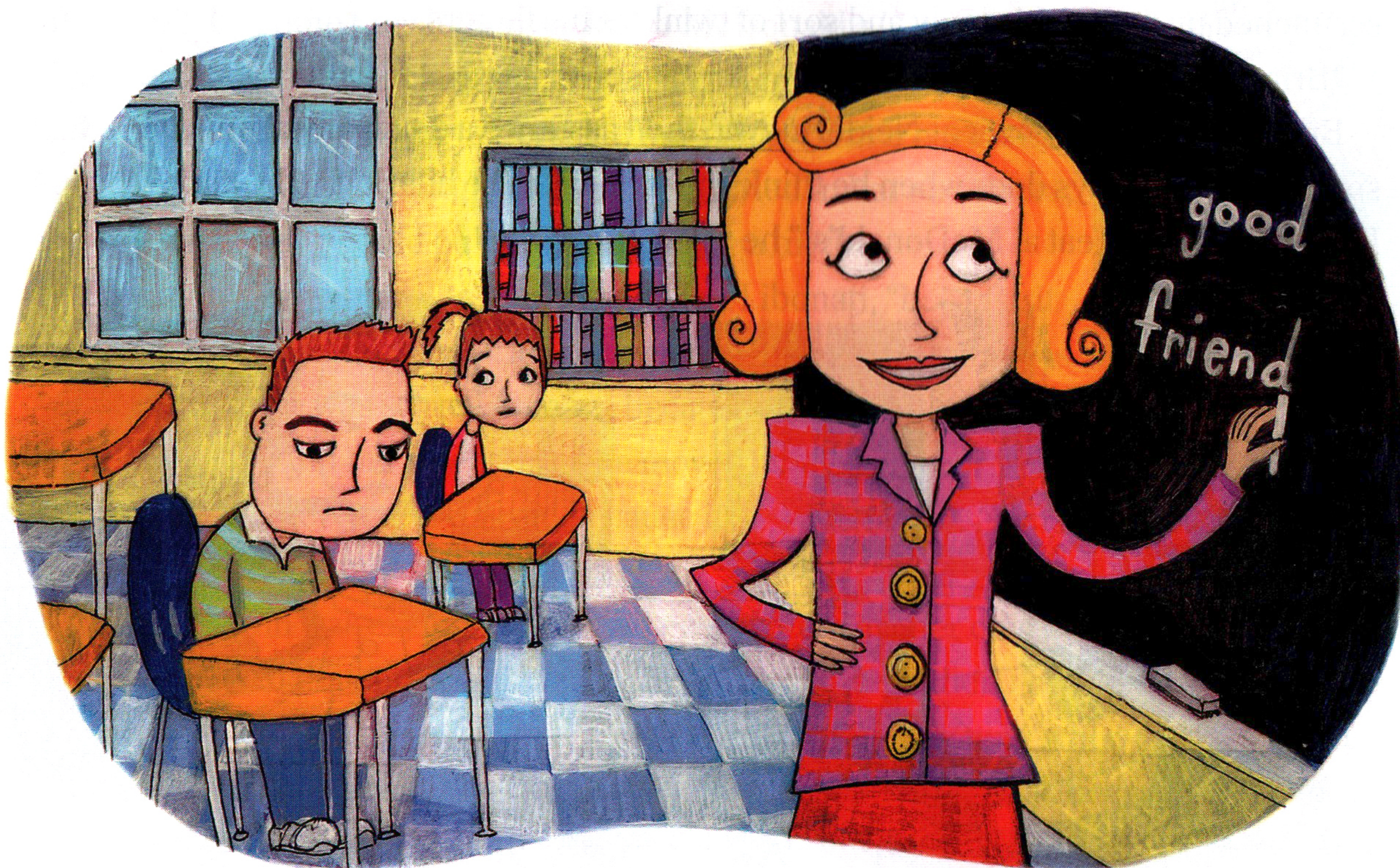
"I want you to come up with something else," says Mrs. Libonati, smiling—this time with *tons* of crocodile.

Brian wallows. "I think...that...uh...Pat Marie is..."

"Yes?"

"I think that Pat Marie is a good friend." He says it quickly and lets out a deep sigh.

"Very good!" agrees Mrs. Libonati. "Her essay showed this very well."



From this point on, everyone in the class comes up with praise for Pat Marie. *Concerned. Helpful. Sensitive. Brave. Loving.* Someone even suggests *Heroic*, but Mrs. Libonati does not write that one down.

"I think this about does it," says Mrs. Libonati. "But before we all go home, I want to have a turn, too. Do you know what I learned about you, Pat Marie?" By this time, Pat Marie wears the dazed look of someone who just had a suitcase dropped on her head.

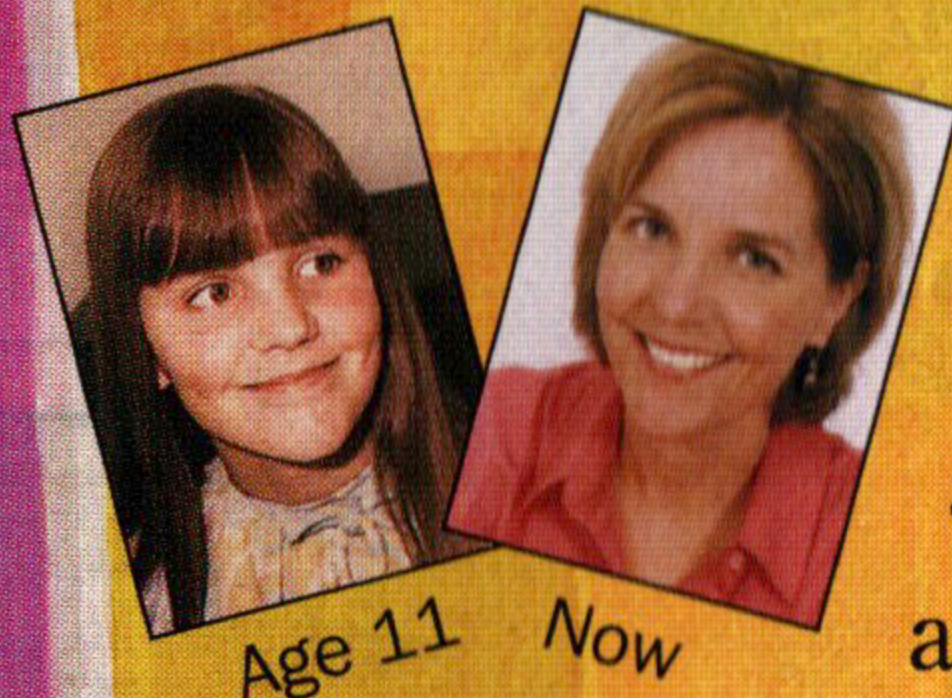
"I learned," continues the teacher, "that you are a very special girl. Because it is not everybody who can take another person's feelings as seriously as she does her own. That is the ingredient needed to be a good friend—and a good person." Then, in her clipped and businesslike manner, she says, "Class dismissed."

Agnes continues to sit in her chair. She watches as Mrs. Libonati strides toward her desk with that perfect posture. *Smack. Smack.* She gathers each stack of papers and squares it up on her desk before tucking the papers into her big leather portfolio. She reminds Agnes of a soldier—one who fights for the good guys. Agnes sends her a silent message: *Thank you, thank you, Mrs. Libonati.* ★



Meet the Author

Kathleen O'Dell

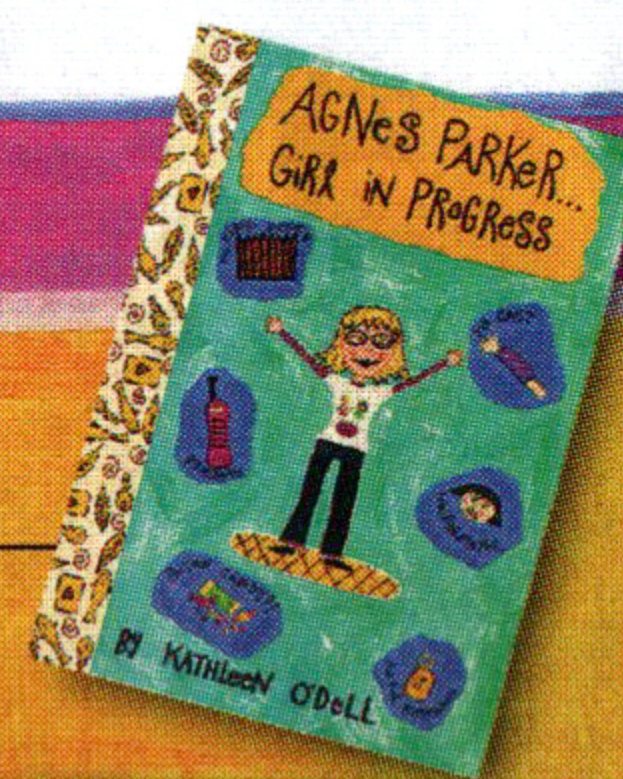


Age 11

Now

When I was 11, the girls in my class passed around a "slam book" in which kids could express any opinion they wanted. One day, the subject was a girl in class: Why I Don't Like _____.

I just couldn't sign it. A surprising thing happened. When I refused to sign, other people did, too. Soon after that, slam books disappeared altogether. Sometimes, all it takes is one girl to turn the tide. It's a little miracle you can set in motion all by yourself.



Turn to page 2 to find out how you can win an autographed copy of *Agnes Parker...Girl in Progress!*



Sweet & Spooky

Create a creepy candy castle to frighten friends and family!

You will need:

For the Castle

- Cardboard box lid, about 11 inches by 17 inches
- 3 cans chocolate frosting
- 2 clean, empty half-gallon cardboard milk cartons
- Stapler
- Chocolate graham crackers
- White and orange gel icing
- 2 paper towel tubes
- 2 chocolate sugar cones
- Candy for decorative trim

For the Decorations

- Chocolate cookie crumbs
- Cocoa Krispies cereal
- Cookies for tombstones
- Candy pumpkins
- Black licorice
- Peanut butter cups
- Peanut-shaped sandwich cookies
- White frosting
- Mini chocolate chips
- Pretzel rods

The Castle

1 Cover the top of the box lid with frosting. This will be the base. Staple the spouts of the milk cartons closed. Stick the cartons onto the base side by side, touching.

2 Spread frosting onto graham crackers and press them onto the sides of the cartons. Draw brick outlines with gel icing. For the roof, use frosting to attach overlapping pieces of broken graham crackers.

3 For the towers, cover the paper towel tubes with frosting and stick them onto the base next to the cartons. Top with sugar cones.

Ghoulish Graveyard

Sprinkle the frosted box top with chocolate cookie crumbs. Add cookie tombstones and a Cocoa Krispies path to the front door. Plant candy pumpkins along the path!

Trees of Terror

With scissors, cut 1 end of a black licorice stick to make branches. Push the other end of the licorice through a hole in the bottom of a peanut butter cup, using chocolate frosting to cement the tree in place.



Tasty Trim

Use your imagination—and some frosting—to add sweet, spooky decorations to the towers and along the sides and top of the castle.

Boo!

No haunted house is complete without ghosts! Spread white frosting on peanut-shaped sandwich cookies. Add mini chocolate-chip eyes and a mouth. For the ghost in the window, nibble off the bottom half of the cookie.



Shuddery Shutters

For window shutters and a door, nibble the corners of sugar wafer cookies to make them round, then attach the cookies to the house with frosting. Trim with gel icing.

Rickety Fence

Break pretzel rods down to different lengths, and plant them around the edges. ★



The Giggle Gang



Knock, Knock!

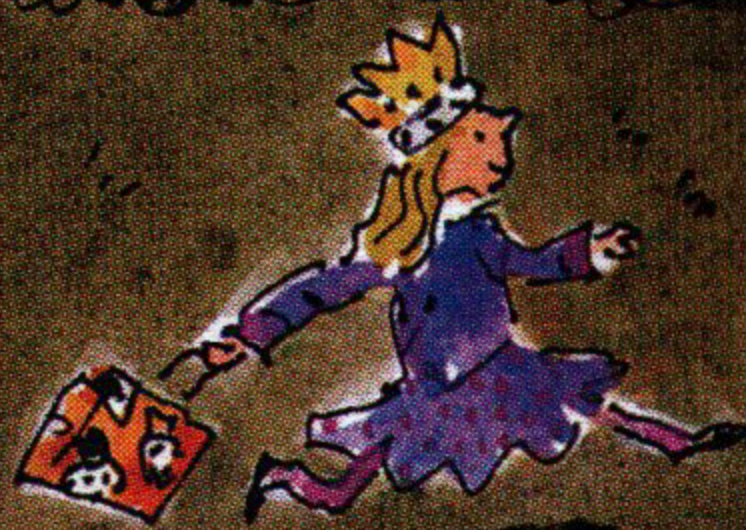
To solve this puzzle, figure out who each Halloween character is by what she says after knocking on the door while trick-or-treating.

Across

1. This snack is *purrr*fect.
2. My tiara and diary for a treat.
4. I'm all wrapped up in this holiday.
5. A sweet for the sheet? You're making me booooo-hoo.
7. I could use a little treat to put some meat on my bones!
8. You're such a bud for handing out these sweet-smelling treats.
9. This treat has earned an A+!
13. I'm with Harry. Can we rest a spell?
14. Rah, rah, hi! Give me C-A-N-D-Y.

Down

1. Thanks for 1 ripe apple, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of caramel, and 2 tablespoons of nuts.
2. Gourd evening.
3. I'll take two treats, but call me in the morning.
6. I love your house! There's no place like home.
10. I'll save this treat for tomorrow, tomorrow, I love ya, tomorrow.
11. A peace of candy! Here's a love bead in thanks.
12. I take this candy to love, honor, and cherish till bite we do part.



Why do ghosts make great sports fans? Because they have a lot of spirit.

What fruit does Dracula like for breakfast?

All answers on page 44.

Eerie Emoticons

Send these spooky smileys to your friends!

{:-O Did you hear that?

Beware of Frankenstein.

[:|

:O Boo.

I vant to drink your blood.

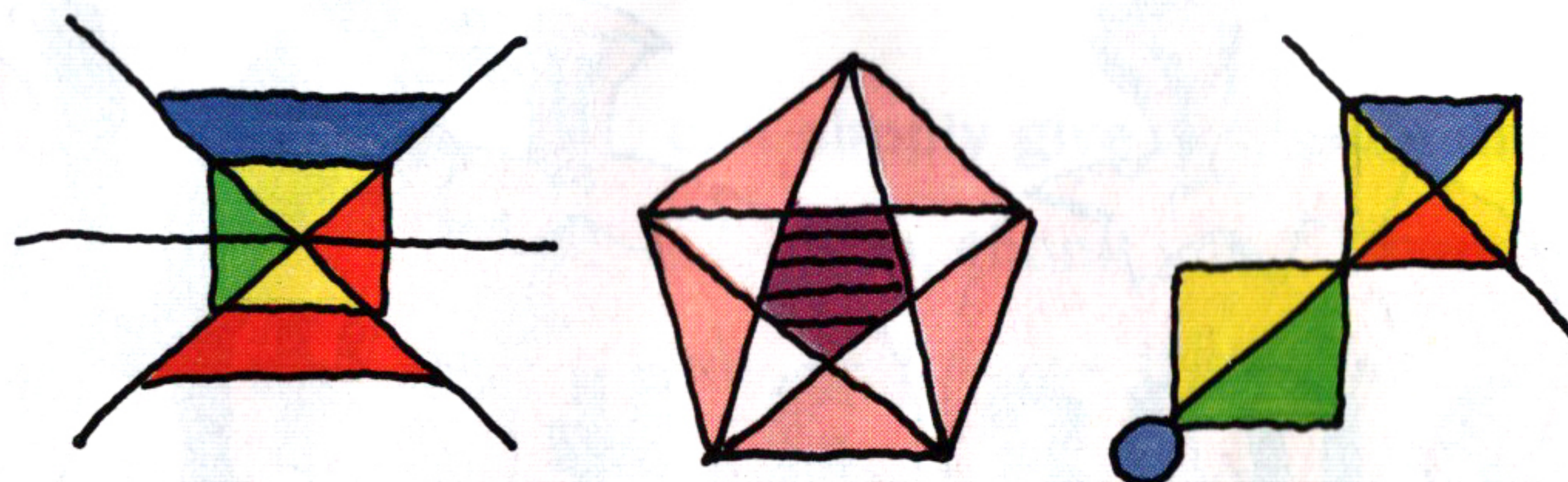
>:-[

<{^.,.^}> Watch out! It's Bat Smiley.

It's the witching hour! **<|:^^)**

Figure It Out

Sit back-to-back with a pal. Describe one of these figures to your friend while she draws it. Try to be specific. When you're done, see how close her drawing matches!



Thanks to
Amy K., age 12,
from Canada, for this
cool challenge!

Party Path

Can you get this guest from the door to the punch bowl?



Illustrations: Paul Meisel

Neck-tarines. Ghost: Doc, what did my X-ray show? Doctor: Absolutely nothing. How do you fix a cracked jack-o'-lantern?

With a pumpkin patch. Ghost one: What did your mom pack you for lunch? Ghost two: The usual. A boo-loney sandwich, ghou-aid, and a rice-creepie treat.

The Giggle Gang



Math-O'-Lantern

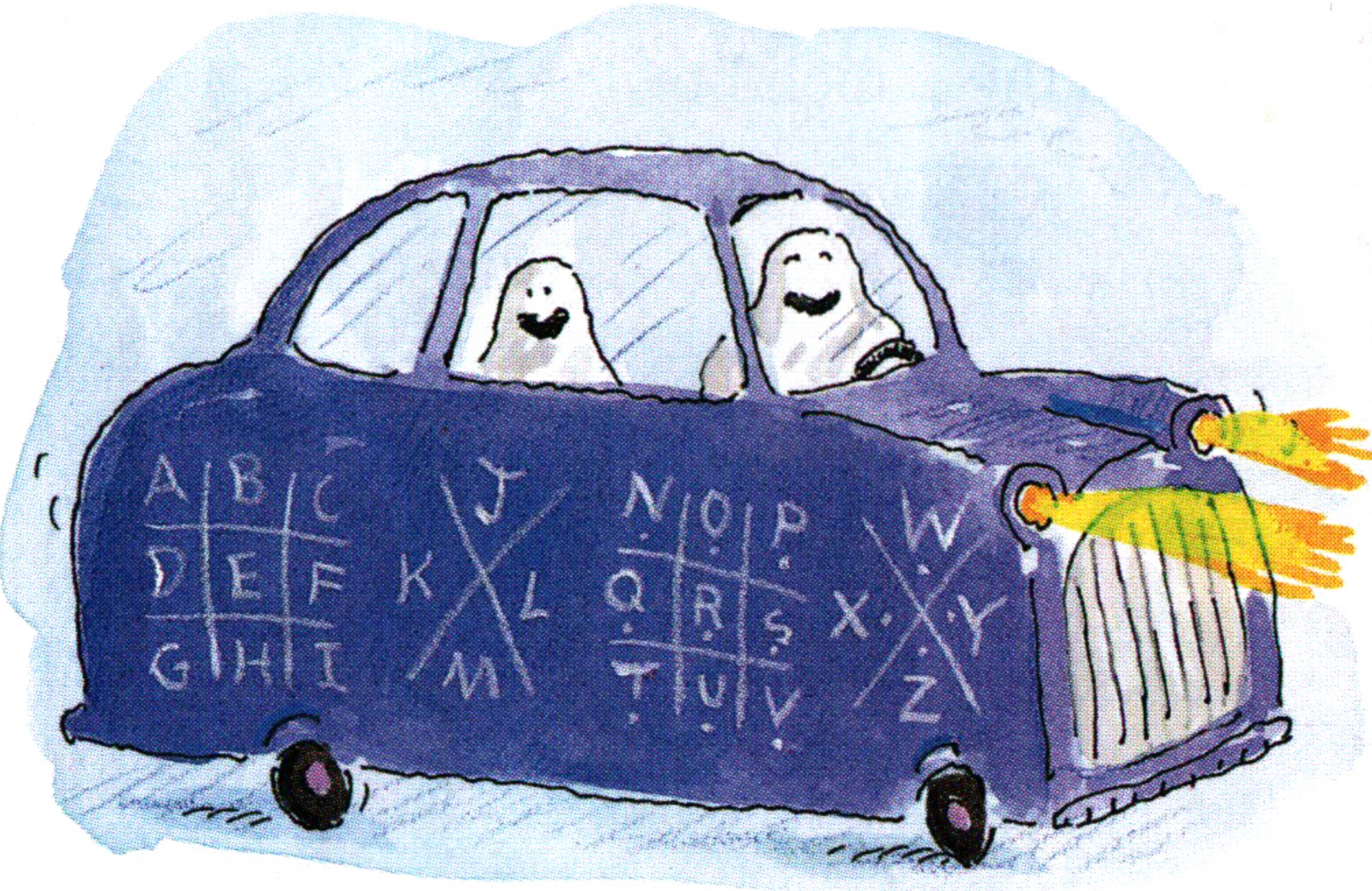


Look at the numbers on each pumpkin. What number should be added to the last pumpkin? **Hint:** It all adds up to a Halloween happening!



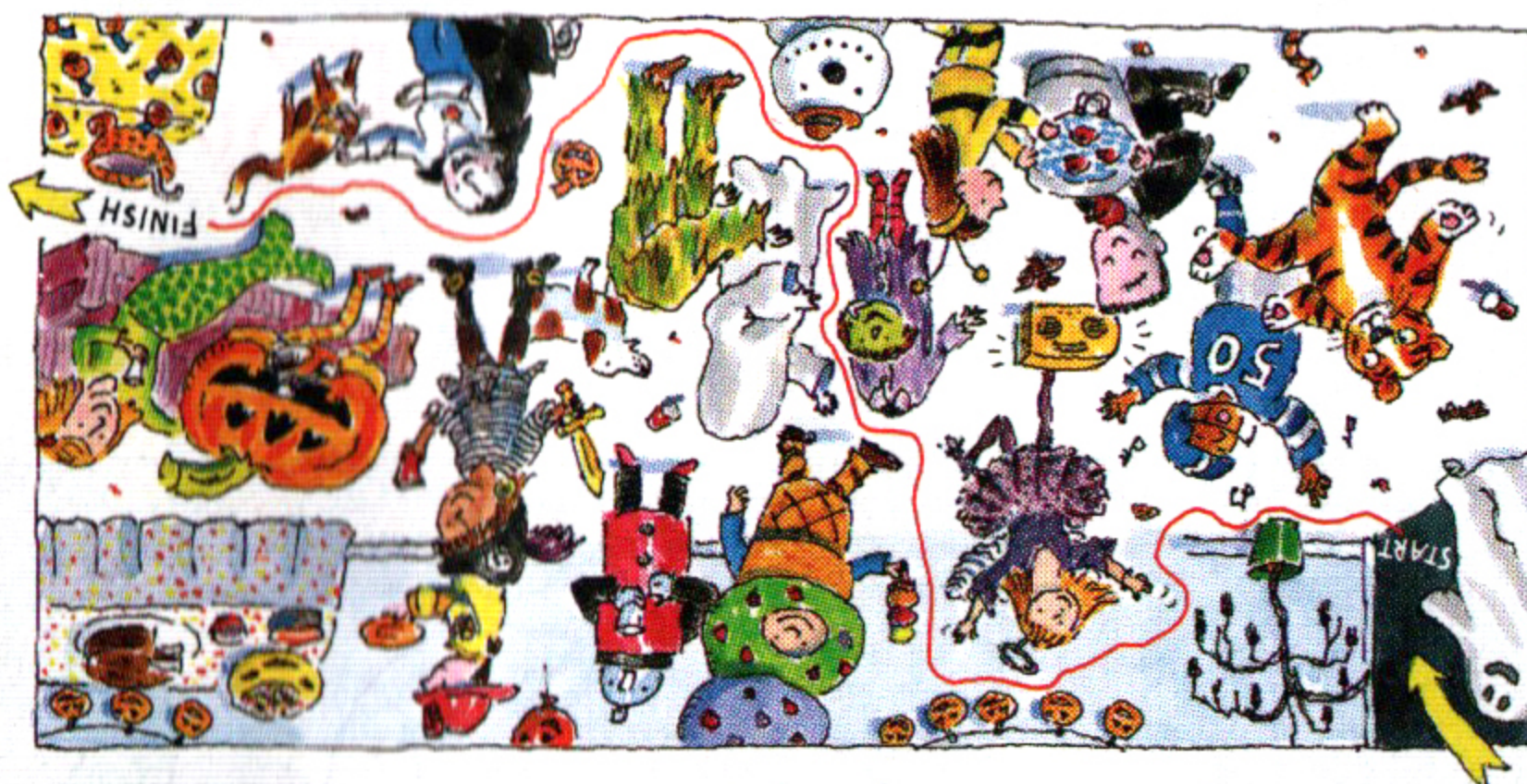
AG Code

What did the mom ghost say to her little one after they got into the car?

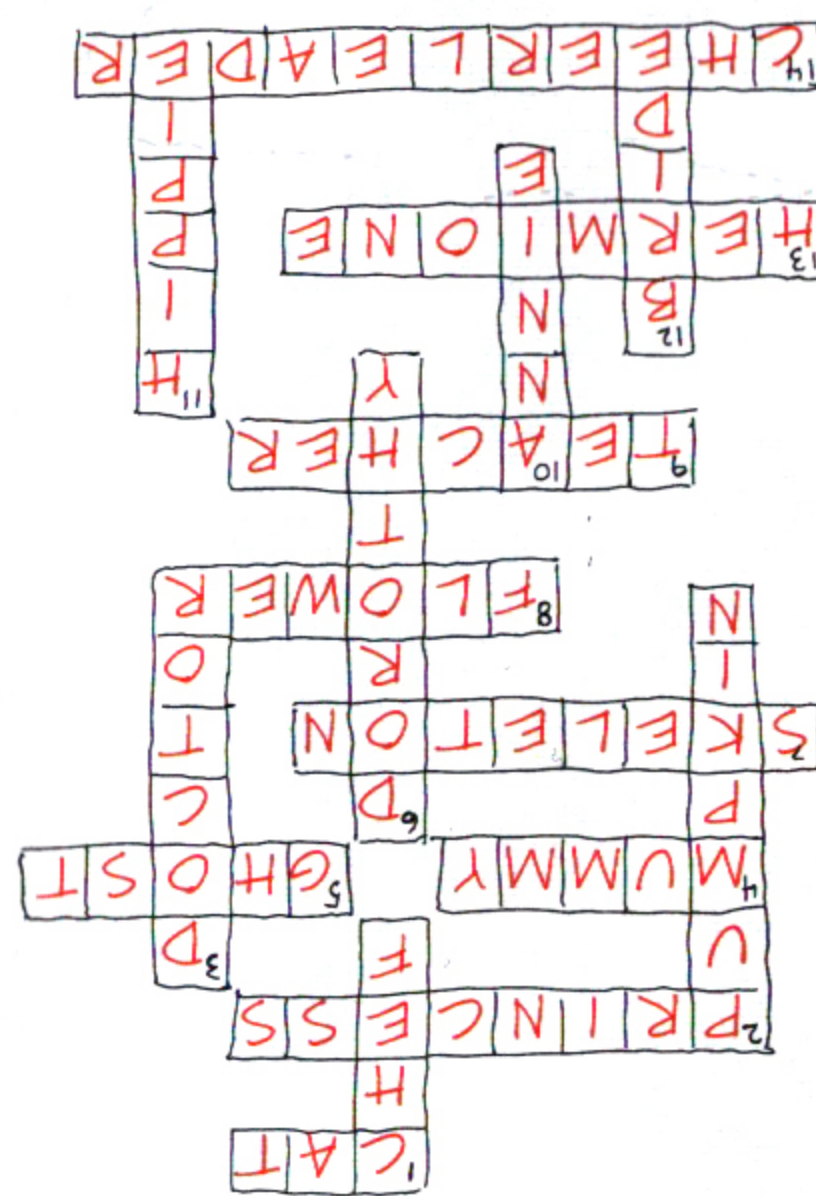


Put on your
Sheet Belt!

Answer Box



Knock, Knock!
The buzzword, is used on
page 48.
Math-O'-Lantern:
The number 5!
Each pumpkin totals
31—the date
for Halloween.
AG Code: Put on
your sheet belt!
Behind the Scenes:
Elizabeth Taylor.
Party Path:



What monster loves to dance? The boogie-man.

What did the doctor say to the little ghou! at his checkup?

How does a ghou! know her future? She reads it in her horoscope.

Why are all those mummies carrying boom boxes? They love wrap music.

Where do werewolves stay on vacation? At Howiday Inns.

What do you call a huge rainstorm that blows on Halloween? A horroricane!

You gruesome.

HELP!

Dear American Girl,

I'm always picked last in gym. It really hurts. What can I do?
loser?

Tell your gym teacher how you feel and ask her to try other ways of choosing teams. You could split up alphabetically, or by whose birthdays come before June 30 and whose come after. You could even line up from shortest to tallest and put every other person on the same team. No matter what happens, if you try your best when you play, you're not a loser.



Dear American Girl,

At school, I found a \$20 bill on the playground. My friend was with me when I found it. She didn't see it—I did. I turned it in to the office, and they said if no one claims it, I could have it. My friend keeps wanting to check to see if anyone has claimed it. She keeps saying, "I hope we get the money," but I was the one who found it. Should I share it with her?
Keep or Share?



It sounds like your friend thinks you both found the money. Since you didn't say anything when she first brought it up, it would be hard to convince her now that you're the only one who found the money. Look at it this way. If you keep all the money for yourself, you'll have twenty dollars and a big fight with your friend. But if you share it, you'll have a happy friend, and you'll still have ten dollars!



Dear American Girl,

What do you do if a boy you don't like at all asks you to dance at the school dance? How do you say no without being rude?

Polite Dancer

If you don't want to dance with a boy, it isn't rude to say no. You

can simply give a small smile and say, "No, thank you." Chances are, he'll leave it at that. But when he walks away, you should resist the temptation to giggle about him with your friends.



Dear American Girl,

Every year I sit with the same group of friends at lunch. This year I made some new friends that I like sitting with, too. The problem is that my other friends hate it when I sit with my new friends. I have no idea what to do. I need your help!

Lunch Problem

You could get to lunch first and see who sits with you. Or you could try to mix both groups of friends together into one big group. You could even eat with one group, then stop by the other group to chat before you have to go back to class. Whatever you decide to do, don't let your friends boss you around. It's perfectly O.K. to eat with one group sometimes and the other group the rest of the time.

MORE HELP!

Dear American Girl,

I hate all my school pictures. My parents just love them, but they're all so dorky-looking to me. Could you give me tips about making my photos fab?
Photo Fanatic

Wear comfortable clothes on picture day. Solids and simple patterns usually look best. Check your hair in a mirror to make sure it looks good, but don't try to do anything fancy at the last minute. When it's time to smile, laugh a little. It should make your smile look more genuine and less posed. To really feel sanguine about how your photos will turn out, ask your parents to take some practice shots of you at home in the outfit and hairdo you plan to wear.

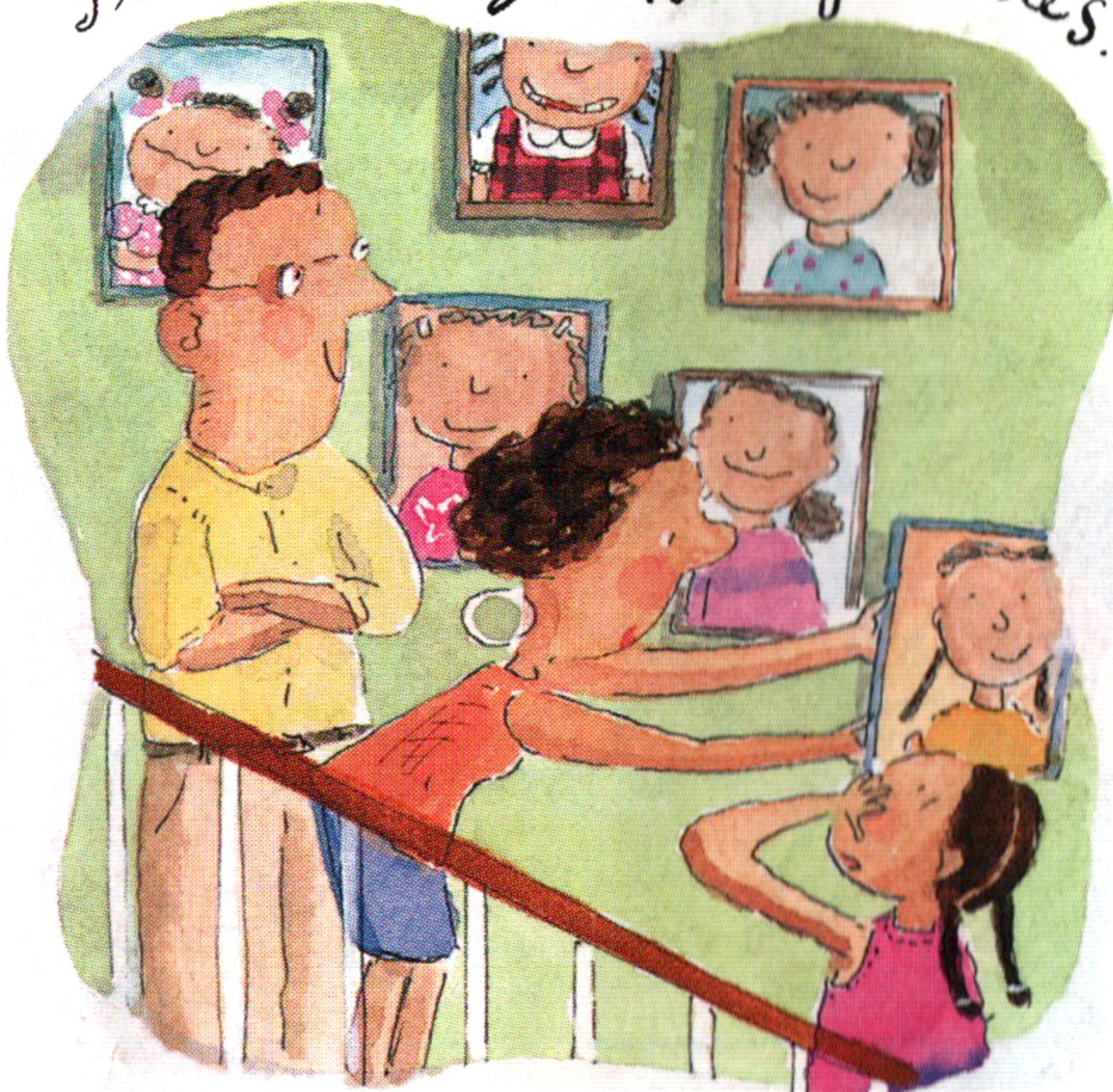


Dear American Girl,

When I need to go into the basement, I'm scared of what could be down there. I ask someone to go down with me.
help me

It's easy to freak yourself out by imagining creepy critters in the

I hate all my school pictures.



dark. Instead, sing a cheerful song out loud. It also helps to dream up something sweet that you wish were down there, like the cutest puppy you ever saw, in a basket lined with a fuzzy blanket. If you really concentrate on the details, you won't have a chance to let shadows give you the shivers.



Dear American Girl,

Ever since I got in trouble for talking too much, my teacher has been extra picky about my behavior. I'm not a bad student. I'm just always in trouble.
Not a bad Student

To stop being the teacher's pest, you have to start thinking like a star student. Put yourself in your teacher's shoes. What can you do

to make her job easier instead of harder? Paying attention in class, remembering your supplies, and turning in homework on time are givens. But you can also speak up when she needs a volunteer or put extra effort into your assignments. Really show her you're making an effort to be on your best behavior, and she'll notice.



Advice from You

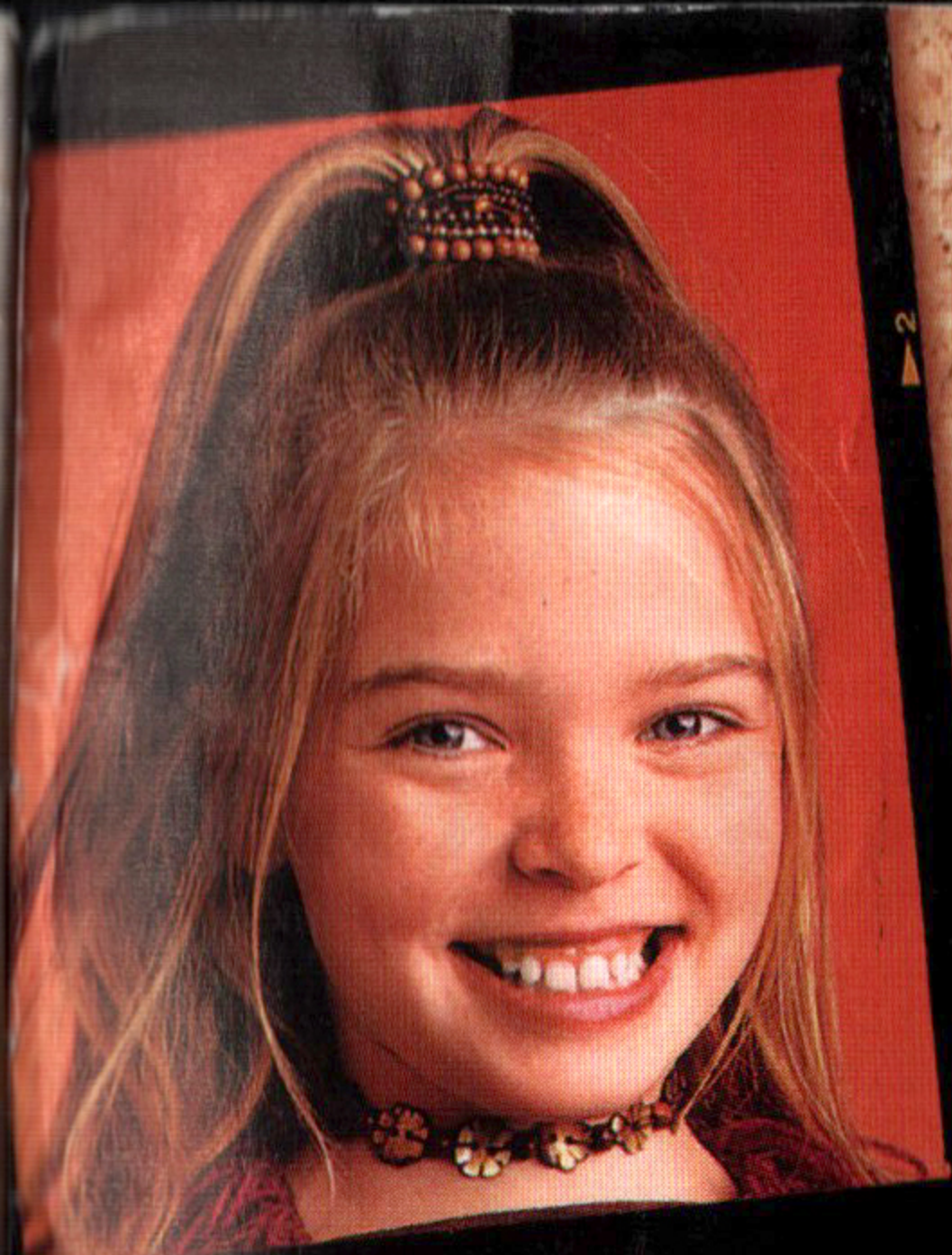
"You know how parents are always telling you to clean your room? Well, you can just pretend you work at a clothing store, and your job is to hang and fold the clothes. You're cleaning your room, but it's fun, fast, and easy!"

Kathleen F.
Age 14, New York

Need advice? Got advice? Write: Help!

AmericanGirl

8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562



The hair stylist tried lots of fun styles on Kelsey's hair. We liked them all but had to choose just one for the cover. Which one do you like the best?



Go to americangirl.com and vote for your favorite 'do!



So many choices! We shopped for heaps of slippers for the sleepover photo shoot. See if you can spot the ones we chose for the party.



Shirley Temple wasn't the only actress shown in "Fun Fashion Fads." Can you name this famous actress?

Turn to page 44 for the answer.



Kia, age 11, 1998

Being a model doesn't always mean pretty hair and cute clothes. Just ask model sisters Kia and Carly. Carly is the kooky-glasses model in the Back-to-School Sleepover and her sister Kia modeled for AG five years ago—as a bowling ball! Here is a recent photo of the sisters.



Carly, age 11, 2003



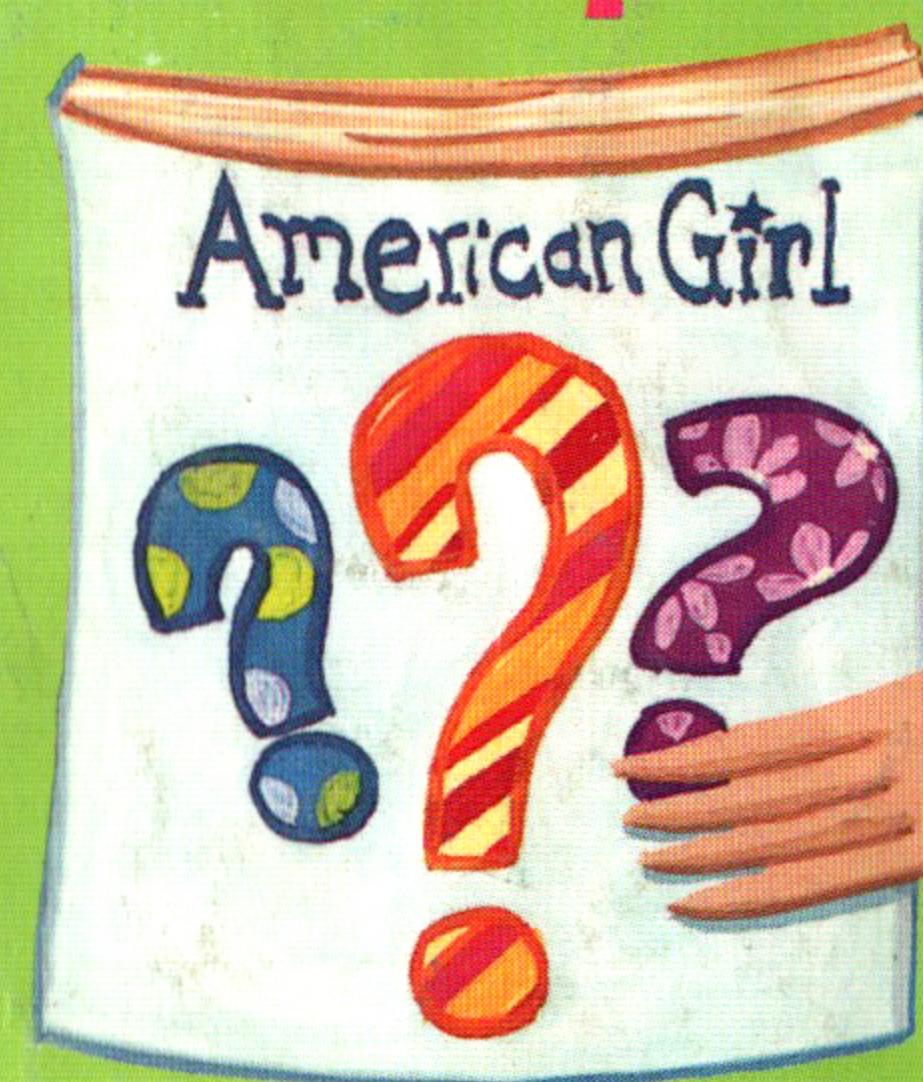
Go to americangirl.com for more games, advice, and fun!



Rachel rocks! Here are our tickets from when we saw her show in Madison.

What Do You Know-Ho-Ho?

Take this quiz to see if you're
the holiday expert in your family!



Front-Page News

At last! See the winners of
our cover contest.



American Girl®

Coming up in the November/December issue

For lots
more fun, games,
and things to do,
be sure to check out
americangirl.com!

Up All Night

Have a blast on New Year's Eve
with your family and friends!



Be Yourself

Readers' best tips on what to
do when you feel too shy



Super Surprises

We'll wrap up our
10th birthday celebration!

Handmade Holidays

Easy crafts to make and sell
or to give as gifts

